

Jawaharlal Nehru
Letters to Chief Ministers
1947-1964

Volume 1
1947 1949



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General Editor

G. Parthasarathi



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PRIME MINISTER

FOREWORD

The Indian Republic is built on the foundations of liberty and the sovereignty of the people. It believes that all decisions and policies should be actuated by the desire to lighten the burdens of the people and lead them to a higher level of self respect and autonomy. In our system the state does not subscribe to any religious dogma. This grand vision of a nation growing in freedom is a legacy to us of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Our constitution itself is an expression of the democratic spirit that our freedom movement exemplified. Mahatma Gandhi succeeded in drawing millions upon millions of our people into that movement. He did it in spite of the prevalent illiteracy and the fact that in his day the media had no mass reach. The mystery can be explained only by the fact that Gandhi's incandescent words came out from the depth of truth. The Indian freedom movement became the world's largest democratic movement because of the constant dialogue between the leaders and the people.

Jawaharlal Nehru shared his master's gift for communication with the people. He knew that a democratic mass movement gained inner strength only when a common set of ideals was shared through the exercise of reasoned examination by the largest number of people. It is in order to convince the people of India of the conceptual and practical soundness of his beliefs and courses of action that Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote so copiously and tirelessly. His three great books, the hundreds of articles he wrote and the thousands of speeches he delivered whether to kisans or urban audiences or intellectual groups had this aim.

Editorial Note

Fifteenth August 1947 was more than the occasion for the transfer of power in India from the British to the representatives of the Indian people. It marked the successful culmination of a long and heroic struggle full of trial and suffering. If the opportunities for the newly independent nation were great, so were the responsibilities of its government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru.

On becoming the first Prime Minister of a free India, Jawaharlal Nehru initiated the practice of writing periodically to the Chief Ministers of the provincial governments on the various issues and problems confronting the government and people of India. He deliberately adopted an informal style and thought aloud so as to give the recipients some idea as to the problems to which the Central Government gave priority and its approach to them. Though addressed to the Chief Ministers, these letters had a much wider circulation and were read by Nehru's colleagues at Delhi, by senior officials throughout the country and by all India's ambassadors and high commissioners. Though pressure of work often obstructed the Prime Minister's desire to write regularly these letters, which came to be known as *fortnightlies*, they were keenly looked forward to at the time and are invaluable today for the insight they provide into the evolution both of Nehru's thought and of official policy.

This first volume of Nehru's fortnightly letters covers the crucial months from 15 August 1947 to 31 December 1949. This was a formative period full of problems and challenges. The massacres and the migrations in the wake of partition raised urgent problems of maintenance of law and order and rehabilitation of refugees, and they had to be tackled even while

evinced faith in his country's policy to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disaster on an even vaster scale. Besides reaffirming deep faith in Gandhian principles of peace and friendship towards all, the policy also showed a highly pragmatic approach to the post-war situation in the world.

Perhaps more important than all was the economic problem basic enough even before it was further intensified by partition. The economy had to bear additional burdens because of heavy imports of foodgrains and severe inflation. The colonial economy had to be restructured as it was obviously not suited to meet the requirements of an independent and democratic nation. Though planning on an all-India basis had to wait for more propitious times, the necessary spadework was done during this period.

Stress is laid in these letters on the importance of democratic values. Chief Ministers were admonished to respect the civil liberties of the people, emphasising the fundamental rights of the individual, the independence of the judiciary and the functioning of a genuinely free press. Nehru was also a crusader for secular values, which was to him, in the final analysis, the only sure foundation for the unity of India.

Mahatma Gandhi had an abiding influence on Nehru in shaping these basic policies of the government. He made moving references to Gandhi, especially after his assassination, and expressed the feelings of millions when he said in his broadcast immediately after Gandhi's death that the light that shone in this country was no ordinary light. For that light represented the eternal truths, reminding us of the right path. The need to adopt the right means, which was not merely a moral precept but a wise and expedient policy, was often stressed. In one of the letters, Nehru said: *In the difficult days ahead of us we should try to remember the teachings of the Master and not allow ourselves to be led astray by momentary passion.*

These letters throw much new light on the manner in which problems faced by the country often deepening into crises were handled and basic policies evolved. Their publication now should greatly enhance our understanding of Nehru the leader and statesman as well as of the recent history of our country. In fact many of his detailed prescriptions for the ailments of our society and his approach to problems continue to be relevant in our time.

Besides these fortnightly letters Nehru also occasionally wrote to the Chief Ministers on some subjects of serious import. Such letters are also being published along with the fortnightly letters.

This project is sponsored by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund. We are grateful to the Government of India for giving us permission to publish these letters. The initiative for publishing these letters was taken by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. This is the *first volume of the series*.

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Abbreviations

A I C C	All India Congress Committee
A I R	All India Radio
C I D	Criminal Investigation Department
E C A F E	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
F A O	Food and Agriculture Organization
G A T T	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
G O C (in C)	General Officer Commanding (in Chief)
I N A	Indian National Army
N W F P	North West Frontier Province
R S S	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
U K	United Kingdom
U P	United Provinces later Uttar Pradesh
U N O	United Nations Organization
U S A	United States of America
U S S R	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
V C O	Viceroy's Commissioned Officer



No other territory of India map could be purchased of the
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The historical map of India, which is the
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the disturbances had not been halted in western U P they would eventually have spread eastwards right up to Bihar and West Bengal and the whole of northern India would have been in chaos. Nor could the forces of disorder have in that case been kept confined to northern India. We would then have faced quite apart from the butchery of innocent lives and the destruction of property wholesale disruption of communications disorganisation in food supply and the spread of epidemic diseases. We would in fact have faced complete chaos in the country and the destruction of all constitutional government. We have overcome this danger. Unceasing vigilance is still necessary and we have many grave problems confronting us but I feel I can tell you that we have turned the corner and are in a position to face the future with confidence.

3 There are some aspects of the present situation to which I would draw your attention. I have mentioned them in some of my public statements but they are so important that I make no apology for reiterating them.

4 I know there is a certain amount of feeling in the country — how strong it is in your province you can judge better than I can — that the Central Government has somehow or other been weak and following a policy of appeasement towards Muslims. This of course is complete nonsense. There is no question of weakness or appeasement. We have a Muslim minority who are so large in numbers that they cannot even if they want to go anywhere else. They have got to live in India. That is a basic fact about which there can be no argument. Whatever the provocation from Pakistan and whatever the indignities and horrors inflicted on non Muslims there we have got to deal with this minority in a civilised manner. We must give them security and the rights of citizens in a democratic State. If we fail to do so we shall have a festering sore which will eventually poison the whole body politic and probably destroy it. Moreover we are now on a severe trial in the international forum. I have it on the authority of our delegates to the

U N O that the friendliness towards India which existed before the recent tragedy has changed and we are looked upon with distrust and almost with a certain degree of contempt. We cannot afford to ignore this feeling. We are dependent for many things on international goodwill—increasingly so since partition. And pure self interest apart from moral considerations demands that world opinion should be on our side in this matter of treatment of minorities.

I would ask you therefore as a matter of great importance to take steps to put across to the public the true basis of our policy. How exactly you should do so is a matter which I must leave to your judgment. It must depend on local factors.

5 The other important question to which I would draw your attention is the paramount importance of preserving the public services from the virus of communal politics.

There is a great deal of evidence that the services in Pakistan have got out of hand and are not amenable to the control of their government. You will have noticed that Mr Jinnah¹ himself referred in a recent address in Karachi to the indiscipline that has set in in the services.² This is already a serious headache for Pakistan and will probably be more serious in future. Fortunately for us taking an overall picture we have been fortunate in this respect and we have been able generally speaking to preserve the integrity of the services against the communal virus. But there have been lapses in East Punjab specially in the police and unless we are vigilant

1 M A Jinnah (1876-1948) President of the Muslim League 1916-1920 and from 1934 till his death. Governor General of Pakistan 1947-48.

2 Addressing the senior officers on 11 October 1947 Jinnah said: 'I was pained to learn that a good many of our staff are not pulling their weight. Some of them have been demoralised by the happenings in East Punjab and Delhi and in others the general lawlessness prevailing in some parts of the country has bred a spirit of indiscipline. These tendencies if not checked, immediately will prove more deadly than our external enemies and will spell ruin on us.'

the disease may spread. We would then be faced with a situation of the utmost gravity viz. of having a government in office which could not get its decrees executed by its own servants—the sort of thing that is happening so frequently in the South American Republics. I would ask you therefore to allow no laxity in the loyal execution of government's policy by its servants particularly in the matter of just and fair treatment to minorities. If we condone lapses in this respect we shall be storing up serious trouble for the country in the future.

6 We have been so preoccupied with problems arising out of the disturbances in the Punjab that we have been able to give hardly any time to other problems of almost equal urgency. Our economic position is really quite serious. There has been a marked rise in prices during the last twelve months and since the war ended the rise in prices has been 57 points.³ The movement has been rather rapid in recent months for between January and the middle of August this year the wholesale price index rose by 28 points. The rise in retail prices has probably been larger. This has not been due to any increase in currency—in fact the total volume of money in circulation⁴ whether currency or bank deposits has slightly fallen since the end of the war—but to a fall in the production of consumable goods. I am afraid we have been losing all along the line in textiles in steel and various other basic commodities.⁵ There seems also no end to our dependence on overseas sources for our food supplies.⁶ The only solution to this problem is increased production. This means both a positive drive towards that end and

3 The wholesale price index with 1939 as base year stood at 298.0 in September 1947.

4 In November 1945 it was Rs. 2,389 crores and rose to Rs. 2,652 crores in April 1946. In September 1947 it was Rs. 2,452 crores.

5 The industrial production index with 1937 as base stood at 102.4 in 1947 compared to 120.00 in 1945. Correspondingly the production of cotton textiles stood at 95.8 in 1947 compared to 120.0 in 1945. Steel at 121.8 in 1947 compared to 142.9 in 1945.

6 In September 1947 India imported 97,000 tons of grains, pulses and flour compared to 38,000 tons imported in January 1947.

vigilant steps against anything that hampers production such as strikes and lock outs. We have set up here a sub committee of the Cabinet to examine and make recommendations regarding the machinery which will enable us to deal effectively with economic problems. This sub committee is meeting shortly and I will keep you informed of any major recommendations which are likely to be of interest to provinces. In the meanwhile I would ask you to keep this matter prominently in mind and see that every possible step is taken which would increase production and reverse the spiral process now so dangerously in evidence.

7 I would like to draw your attention to the letter from the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation No R & R 1(1) dated the 23rd September asking for information to enable the drawing up of a movement programme for at least a proportion of the refugees. I hope your government is giving urgent consideration to that letter.

8 I enclose for your information a copy of a note by the Ministry of Railways which explains how the Pakistan Government are still exercising jurisdiction over some of the railway lines in parts of West Bengal.⁷ There is here a source of friction between the two Dominion Governments which might have repercussions on the law and order situation in East and West Bengal. For the present I am mentioning this matter merely for your information. We are pursuing the matter with the Pakistan Government and hope that it will be settled smoothly.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

⁷ The total earnings of the Bengal Assam Railway between Kancharapara and Lalgolaghat stations including the Santipur Navadwip branch of the Bongaon section were being collected by East Pakistan Railways.

2

New Delhi
2 November, 1947

My dear Prime Minister

In my letter to you dated the 15th October I said that we had turned the corner and are in a position to face the future with confidence though unceasing vigilance was still necessary I little realised then how quickly our vigilance would be tested

2 You must have followed developments in Kashmir¹ It is extraordinary how these developments remind one of the technique adopted by Hitler² Indeed the whole policy of the Muslim League during the past few years has been singularly reminiscent of the Nazi tactic The Kashmir incidents are a kind of climax to this policy

3 I am enclosing a copy of a draft which I have prepared for my broadcast on Kashmir and this will give you some picture of the situation³ I have not emphasised in this broadcast the part

1 Kashmir was one of the princely states which had not acceded to either India or Pakistan by 15 August 1947 though it had signed a Standstill Agreement with the latter The Pakistan Government put pressure on the government in Kashmir through an economic blockade and by fomenting communal troubles In October 1947 the Pakistan Government aided and abetted a massive tribal invasion of the state from its North West Frontier Province By 25 October the raiders had reached Baramula town about 55 km north west of Srinagar The Maharaja of Kashmir asked the Government of India for military aid Kashmir acceded to India on 26 October 1947 and the Indian Government despatched troops on 27 October 1947 to repel the invader

2 Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) Leader of National Socialist (Nazi) Party and dictator of Germany from 1933 till his death

3 The broadcast was made on 2 November 1947 For text see *Independence and After* Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru September 1946 to May 1949 (New Delhi 1949) pp 55-59

which Pakistan has obviously played in this whole affair. But there can be no doubt about it that the so called raiders are well armed and even possess small artillery. They have competent leadership and probably officers of the Pakistan Army have helped in organising them. The actual tribesmen among the raiders are probably limited in numbers, the rest are ex-servicemen. Part of the Muslim element in the Kashmir forces has also gone over to them. Their equipment is good and they have a larger number of lorries. It is impossible to conceive that all this could be done without the full connivance and help of the Pakistan authorities.

4 Our own information is that a Pakistan Army brigade was kept ready at the frontier near Kohala and another brigade was kept at Sialkot near the Jammu frontier. The idea was that as soon as the raiders captured Srinagar they would announce accession to Pakistan and then the regular Pakistan Army would march in and take possession. It has even been suggested that Mr. Jinnah was thinking of some kind of a triumphal entry.

5 Another feature of Pakistan's attack on Kashmir which also reminds one of Nazi Germany is the fierce, blatant and false propaganda that has been carried on by their radio and press. All this should put us on our guard. We may have to face a difficult situation in Hyderabad and the Ittehad ul Muslemeen is a well organised fanatical body which may cause trouble.⁴ Bombay, Central Provinces and Madras have to be particularly watchful. Needless to say, the Government of India is fully conscious of the dangers and is carefully watching the situation. We should like the help of the adjoining provinces especially in this matter.

⁴ Hyderabad state had not acceded to either India or Pakistan before 15 August 1947. The prolonged negotiations for a Standstill Agreement with India were being continuously deadlocked. The draft agreement of 18 October finalised by the Hyderabad delegation was rejected by the Nizam under the pressure of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen, a communal organisation which was demanding an independent state of Hyderabad.

6 One of the features of the Kashmir situation which is worthy of notice is the complete disintegration of Kashmir administration at a moment of crisis. The Maharaja suddenly left Srinagar in the middle of the night accompanied by his Ministers.⁵ Most of the other officers also disappeared and there was no constituted authority left at all. The army itself which was supposed to be strong somehow faded away. About a quarter of it went over to the invaders or deserted. The rest was caught in small pockets and generally did not put up any good show at all. It was the National Conference under Sheikh Abdullah's⁶ leadership that saved the situation. Our troops could have done nothing but for the stand of the National Conference. Even now the defence of Kashmir is largely based on the cooperation of our troops with the civil population which we are partly arming for the purpose.⁷

7 The example of Kashmir shows how feeble the administrative apparatus is in the states and how rapidly it may collapse in a real emergency. Some of the states especially in Rajputana and in East Punjab have been behaving in an undesirable manner.⁸ There are cries of a Sikh state of Rajasthan and Jatastan and the rulers have taken advantage of the communal troubles to suppress the popular movement. Provincial administrations especially those adjoining Indian states have to tighten up their own administrative machinery and keep it thoroughly efficient. Trouble may come from the states and we have to stop it immediately.

5 On 25 October 1947 Maharaja Hari Singh with his Prime Minister left Srinagar for Jammu fearing that the city might fall to the raiders.

6 (1905-1982) Organised the National Conference in Kashmir state in 1938. President of the All India States People's Conference. 1946 Prime Minister of Kashmir from 1948 to 1953 and Chief Minister of Kashmir from 1975 till his death.

7 The National Conference organised a *Bachao Fauz* (Defence Army) to fight alongside the Indian forces.

8 In Bharatpur Alwar Jodhpur Faridkot and Patiala Muslims were being killed.

8 Recent events in Kashmir and partly our action in Babariawad and Mangrol⁹ have been a severe blow to the Pakistan Government. They have a terrible sense of frustration. Already they were being overwhelmed by their problems. The vast number of Muslim refugees who have gone to Pakistan are a terrible burden on them and they cannot look after them. Because of all this they are suffering from the delusion that the Government of India are conspiring to destroy Pakistan. That of course is completely false. There is no conspiracy and there is no desire to destroy their State in any way. Any such attempt would lead to grave injury to us. War is a dangerous thing and must be avoided. Even to talk of war is not healthy. Only those who do not understand it or its consequences talk lightly of war. From the military point of view there is little doubt that if there was war between India and Pakistan, Pakistan as a State would perish. But undoubtedly India would suffer very great injury and all our schemes of progress would have to be pushed aside for many many years. Therefore we must do our utmost to avoid war and that is our definite policy. We cannot be driven into extreme courses simply because thoughtless people shout and become bellicose. We must all in our own way try to make people understand the situation and to reduce the tension so that normal relations might be maintained with Pakistan. Both statesmanship and expediency as well as humanity require this. That of course does not mean that we should surrender our honour or self respect in the slightest. The danger really is not from any well thought out action but from active despair on the part of Pakistan for their leaders have put themselves in a hole and do not know how to get out of it.

9 Junagadh's accession to Pakistan on 15 August 1947 was followed in September by that of Manavadar, a tiny state in Kathiawar region in Gujarat but the Government of India refused recognition as the rulers had acted in defiance of the wishes of the people. Mangrol and Babanawad, two small states forming part of Junagadh, acceded to the Indian Union and by 1 November 1947 Indian troops entered these states to give them protection and validate their accession.

9 It is essential for each province to develop its home guards and to strengthen its police service. We must not demand the military to keep law and order. They must be reserved for special occasions only and for the purpose they are intended. I might draw your attention to the fact that in recruiting for the home guards or the police the ex I N A ¹⁰ personnel might well be used. They are trained soldiers and would easily fit in and do good work. I know that there has been some prejudice against them in recent months because of some occurrences in Bihar and elsewhere. It is also true that the I N A people functioned on both sides during the Punjab disturbances. Also that the Kashmir raiders are led by a prominent I N A officer Major General Kiani ¹¹. But all this can be said of our police force also as well as parts of our army who have not been able to retain their discipline and impartiality in the stress of events. I think it would be definitely desirable to use selected I N A personnel for the home guard and the police. They should normally be mixed with others and not kept as a separate unit.

10 I should like to say that our Indian Army has on the whole kept its balance very well. This cannot be said of the Pakistan Army which has rather gone to pieces and has not got too much discipline left. Our officers in the Army are a fine set of young men. They have had to face suddenly the Kashmir emergency many of them without any experience of the kind and they have shown great resource and courage sometimes bordering on rashness.

11 I should like to draw your attention specially to the necessity for developing intelligence services. This is very

10 The Indian National Army was organised in 1942 by Subhas Chandra Bose with Japanese help to work for India's liberation from British domination. The I N A men surrendered to British forces after the Japanese surrender in 1945.

11 Mohammad Zaman Kiani (1911-1980) Commissioned in the Indian Army 1935 commanded an I N A Division 1944 after partition led guerillas and tribesmen to attack Kashmir later joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan.

2 November 1947

important both from the provincial and the central points of view. It is not easy to develop a good intelligence service suddenly as the men employed must be carefully chosen. Our old intelligence system has more or less broken down as it was bound to because it was meant for other purposes chiefly in tracking Congressmen and the like. The new intelligence service will have to be built differently. There are at present many dangerous tendencies and trends in the country which may broadly be called fascist. They are not only Muslim but also Hindu and Sikh. We should know all about this. The trouble in Delhi was largely due to lack of information in time.¹²

12 The Information Films of India which was started during war time but was abolished in April 1946 is now being revived and it is hoped that by the beginning of next year Government's films and newsreels will again be in circulation. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have written to your Chief Secretary to insert a condition in the licence of exhibitors in your province enjoining compulsory exhibition of films approved by the Central Government and provincial governments. As documentary films and newsreels are not commercially a paying proposition commercial production and distribution is at present practically non-existent in India. I hope your government will utilise this powerful medium to reach the masses more especially for them to understand the various development plans that you are undertaking. These films will also help to develop a social consciousness and a sense of corporate endeavour. I earnestly hope that your government will accept the suggestion of the Ministry of Information.

13 When I was in Lucknow¹³ you informed me of the difficulties which you were meeting with in the way of getting surplus machinery and stores from the Supply Ministry. I understood you to refer to stocks under Disposals and I accordingly took the matter up with the Minister concerned. I am now

¹² Communal riots broke out in Delhi in the first week of September 1947

¹³ Nehru visited Lucknow on 19-20 October 1947

informed that the difficulty is not really in the Directorate General of Disposals what you are up against is the fact that certain stores which you want are not declared to be surplus and therefore not available for sale I am having this point examined further and will let you know as soon as possible how your difficulties can be met ¹⁴

14 I am glad to inform you that the trouble over the handing over of the Pakistan Railway in parts of West Bengal has now been got over The Pakistan Government has issued instructions for the sections of the railway in West Bengal territory to be handed over to India One potential source of friction therefore disappears and for every such small mercy you must be grateful in these times¹⁵

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14 This paragraph was sent only to the Chief Minister of U P

15 This paragraph was sent only to the Chief Minister of West Bengal

3

New Delhi
15 November 1947

My dear Prime Minister,

When I last wrote to you our military position in Kashmir was somewhat precarious and in Junagadh, although we had overwhelming military strength, our position, taken as a whole was a very awkward one. You will have seen from the papers that in both states the situation has since developed satisfactorily from our point of view though in Junagadh it has taken a curious turn which none of us ever expected.¹

2 The position now in Kashmir is that our troops have taken Uri from which one road takes off to Domel on the Abbottabad frontier and another to Poonch where a Kashmir detachment has been beleaguered for quite some time. The Kashmir valley is now practically clear of raiders but for stragglers and the threat to Srinagar has been removed. But the position in Jammu is not very good. We have not till now been able to divert to this region the forces necessary for the operations there, but we are doing so now and the next phase of the campaign will be a move to rid Jammu of raiders. This will not be an easy task for the communications are difficult and the area is very close to West Punjab from which supplies can reach raiders easily. Nevertheless, it is a task which I am confident will be carried out satisfactorily by our army. I very much fear that much damage has already been done to human life and to

¹ The administration of Junagadh state was taken over by the Indian Government on 8 November 1947 when the ruler unable to cope with the situation fled to Pakistan and his prime minister requested India to relieve him of his responsibilities.

informed that the difficulty is not really in the Directorate General of Disposals what you are up against is the fact that certain stores which you want are not declared to be surplus and therefore not available for sale I am having this point examined further and will let you know as soon as possible how your difficulties can be met ¹⁴

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When I last wrote to you our military position in Kashmir was somewhat precarious and in Junagadh, although we had overwhelming military strength, our position, taken as a whole, was a very awkward one. You will have seen from the papers that in both states the situation has since developed satisfactorily from our point of view though in Junagadh it has taken a curious turn which none of us ever expected¹

2 The position now in Kashmir is that our troops have taken Uri from which one road takes off to Domel on the Abbottabad frontier and another to Poonch where a Kashmir detachment has been beleaguered for quite some time. The Kashmir valley is now practically clear of raiders but for stragglers and the threat to Srinagar has been removed. But the position in Jammu is not very good. We have not till now been able to divert to this region the forces necessary for the operations there but we are doing so now and the next phase of the campaign will be a move to rid Jammu of raiders. This will not be an easy task for the communications are difficult and the area is very close to West Punjab from which supplies can reach raiders easily. Nevertheless it is a task which I am confident will be carried out satisfactorily by our army. I very much fear that much damage has already been done to human life and to

1 The administration of Junagadh state was taken over by the Indian Government on 8 November 1947 when the ruler, unable to cope with the situation, fled to Pakistan and his prime minister requested India to relieve him of his responsibilities.

property in Jammu as it has been in Kashmir and by the time we have succeeded in ridding Jammu of the raiders the suffering and misery of the population will have been serious. As I discovered during my recent visit to Kashmir the raiders have indulged wherever they went in loot and destruction and their treatment of women has been particularly shocking. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike have suffered. No effort is too great to drive out this scourge.

3 I must warn you however that although things have improved in Kashmir the position there from many points of view is still not satisfactory. The Maharaja's relations with Sheikh Abdullah continue to be strained and politically there are many loose ends to be tied.¹ The Hindu Muslim problem in Jammu is as bad as in West Punjab of which in fact this part of Kashmir is an extension geographically. While in the Kashmir valley under Sheikh Abdullah's influence there is remarkable communal unity and Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs alike have demonstrated cohesion of purpose and effort in the face of a common danger in Jammu there is fierce communal passion and the R.S.S.² the Akali Dal³ and the Muslim League⁴ operating in varying degrees have created a situation full of explosive possibilities. For this reason our commitments in Jammu and Kashmir will I fear be onerous for quite some time to come.

4 We are watching here the effect of the events in Junagadh

¹ Sheikh Abdullah who had become head of the emergency administration after his release from jail in September 1947 was pressing the Maharaja to convene a constituent assembly representing the people of the state and establish an interim government.

² Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (R.S.S.) a militant Hindu organisation.

³ The Akali Dal set up in February 1901 for promoting reforms in the management of Sikh temples later became a political party.

⁴ The All India Muslim League founded in 1906 with British support for promoting a Muslim political element.

and Kashmir on Hyderabad I know that the provincial governments of Madras Bombay and the C P are particularly exercised over the situation in Hyderabad and over the possibility that the sabre rattling of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen may lead to serious consequences It seems possible however that recent events may have a sobering effect on the Nizam ⁶ if not on the Ittehad We are not taking any chances however as fascist gangs such as the Ittehad have a habit of breaking out in unexpected directions and it would be folly to ignore their potentiality for mischief We are making dispositions of troops as well as we possibly can consistently with our commitments in the Punjab and elsewhere but I know that the provincial governments concerned will continue to watch the situation with great care

5 Looking at the states problem as a whole it seems to me that two historical processes are taking place simultaneously — the growing triumph of popular will in enclaves of sheer autocracy⁷ and the political consolidation of India rendered necessary by the withdrawal of British power and the lapse of paramountcy Both processes are experiencing resistance but I feel sure that both will triumph in the end I would like you in this connection to be on your guard against the development of fissiparous tendencies about which I have received certain disquieting reports Assam has some trouble with the Bengalees West Bengal has some trouble with the Gurkhas in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri who are said to be clamouring for the inclusion of these districts in Assam there is trouble in Orissa between Oriyas and Telugus whose relations are said to be very much estranged To some extent these developments indicate a move for closer cultural ties between men of the same stock and language living in different provinces and I have no doubt

6 Nizam Asaf Jah of Hyderabad (1886 1967) Became ruler of Hyderabad state in 1911 retired from public life in 1956

7 Mysore Baroda Travancore Cochin Udaipur Patiala and Chhatisgarh states were some of the princely states which had introduced constitutional reforms

eventually some readjustment will be necessary. But at this stage of our national life any dispersion of our energies in internal schisms of this kind is likely to be dangerous.

6 More than one Premier has written to me about the need for enlarged facilities for military training. This is partly the reaction to the dangers through which we are exposed and partly to a fundamental defect in our national training. The Defence Committee will shortly consider the report of the National Cadet Corps Committee which was set up before partition.⁸ That report will be circulated to provinces. The recommendations of the committee relate to training only in schools and colleges. If you have in mind anything more elaborate I would suggest your preparing a concrete scheme and sending it to us here. More than one provincial government has worked out a scheme of Home Guards and it seems desirable to have some degree of uniformity. I am sure Sardar Baldev Singh⁹ the Defence Minister will give you all possible assistance in working out your plans.

7 I would like now to draw your attention to two problems of rehabilitation in the solution of which your assistance is necessary.

The question of the continuation of the education of the students who have been obliged to migrate to India from schools and colleges in Pakistan areas and have taken up their residence in your province is no doubt engaging the attention of the provincial government. The Government of India in the Ministry of Education letter No. F 73 97/47 E I dated the 8th October 1947 have already expressed the view that in the special circumstances it is desirable to permit such students to join educational institutions without insisting on the production of migration or other certificates which the students are expected to produce in normal times. They have also stressed

⁸ The National Cadet Corps was formed on 13 March 1948.

⁹ (1902-61) Minister in the Punjab 1942-46 member of the Interim Government 1946-47 Minister for Defence 1947-52.

that the periods of studies in the institutions from which the students come should be taken into account in admitting them to schools and colleges in which they seek admission, even though the courses of studies may vary to a certain degree. I hope the proposal will be considered sympathetically by the provincial government.

The Government of India in the Ministry of Education letter No. F 34 1/47 R dated the 1st November 1947, have already addressed the provincial governments in regard to the employment of teachers from Pakistan areas who have been thrown out of employment and have been obliged to migrate to India. The Government of India have been forwarding to the provincial governments universities, etc. lists of such displaced teachers with full particulars of their qualifications and I hope that there will be a satisfactory response from the authorities concerned for employing as many of these teachers as possible. I hope also that in view of the exceptional circumstances the provincial governments universities etc. will find it possible to relax ordinary rules regarding provincial domicile and age limits required in connection with a provincial appointment and try as far as practicable, to place them in posts carrying salaries equivalent to those which the incumbents were receiving in Pakistan.

8. My Finance Minister¹⁰ will shortly be introducing the central budget in the Constituent Assembly.¹¹ He has been devoting a good deal of thought not merely to what may be called central finance proper but to the overall financial situation in the country including the resources and commitments of provincial governments. There are two points

10. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty (1892-1953) Member of the Swaraj Party who later joined the Justice Party. President of Central Legislative Assembly 1933-34. Dewan, Cochin state 1935-41. Finance Minister, Government of India 1947-48.

11. It was presented on 26 November 1947.

on which I suggest you may consult him. One is about the financial implications of the abolition of the zamindari system¹² and the other about the necessity of finding alternative sources of revenue for the loss on account of prohibition. It is not my purpose to suggest that you should drop or slow down measures of social or agrarian reform which, in your judgment, may have become long overdue and for which indeed there may be clamorous public demand in your province. But the ways and means position at present is somewhat difficult and it would appear wise, before entering into heavy commitments, to consult our expert department before you come to your decisions.

9 During the last few days you must have seen references in the press to the possibility of early negotiations between us and the Governments of Burma¹³ and Ceylon¹⁴ for the settlement of all outstanding matters between the Government of India and these two governments. The position is that we are anxious to see these negotiations through in the course of the next two months so that by the time Burma attains independence¹⁵ and Ceylon attains Dominion Status,¹⁶ the problems of Indians residing or having interest in these two countries will have been satisfactorily solved. I have already invited Thakin Nu,¹⁷ the Prime Minister of Burma, to pay us a visit in the first week of December¹⁸ and am waiting for a reply from him. The Prime

12 The bills abolishing the zamindari system were introduced in the legislatures of Madras, Bihar and U.P. between November 1947 and September 1949.

13 These were about the immigration of Indian labour into Burma, the claims of Indian evacuees who had left behind properties in Burma, and the citizenship rights of Indians.

14 Negotiations were being conducted regarding the legislative measures in 1947 depriving Indians in Sri Lanka of civil rights and privileges.

15 On 4 January 1948.

16 On 4 February 1948.

17 (b. 1907) Leading member of Anti Fascist People's Freedom League, Foreign Minister under Ba Maw, 1943-45, President, Burmese Constituent Assembly, 1947, Prime Minister, 1947-58 and 1960-62.

18 He visited New Delhi from 1 to 4 December 1947.

15 November, 1947

19

Minister of Ceylon, Mr Senanayake,¹⁹ has himself expressed a wish to come over to New Delhi some time in December²⁰ for the purpose of a discussion with me and I have written to our Representative in Ceylon²¹ that I will welcome such a visit. My secretariat will doubtless keep you in touch with the nature and scope of the proposed discussions but I myself will bear in mind the desirability of associating the provincial representatives with the discussions when they start formally.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
22 November 1947

My dear Prime Minister,*

I am writing to you a special letter apart from my usual fortnightly ones as you are coming to Delhi¹ and certain events have happened to which I should like to draw your attention

2 The most important of these is the meeting of the All India Congress Committee² which passed a number of resolutions which you must have seen. These resolutions to some extent repeat the old policy of the Congress. But in the context of events today this policy takes on a new turn and is of vital significance. During the past months with the upsurge of communal feeling there has been considerable confusion in the minds of our people about the attitude that we should adopt. Even many Congressmen have given way to this mental turmoil and confusion. It became necessary therefore for the A I C C to repeat with emphasis this basic policy on which we have built up our national movement and which has led us to the success we have so far achieved.³

3 I shall not repeat these resolutions because you have no

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 The provincial Premiers had come to Delhi to attend a conference convened by the Union Food Minister on 23 November to discuss the new food policy

2 At New Delhi from 15 to 17 November 1947

3 Reaffirming its faith in the secular character and policy of the Congress the A I C C called upon the Government to ensure equal rights to all citizens and complete protection to the minorities

doubt studied them carefully. They emphasize the non communal, democratic and secular character of our approach to the nation's problems. They lay down a policy for the refugees.⁴ They make clear that we cannot compromise our ideals because communal organisations are for the moment shouting a great deal and influencing public opinion. They issue a grave warning against private armies.

4 As a government, whether central or provincial, we cannot and should not show partiality to any group or party. But as a government, we are not merely a group of individuals but have certain ideals and policies. If any individual or group challenges and opposes those ideals and policies, we have to accept that challenge and meet that opposition with full strength. We propose to do so.

5 It is not necessary for me to write to you about the disastrous results of the evil policy followed by the Muslim League and the Pakistanis during the past few years. All of us are fully aware of this and we have seen the consequence of it. We have to continue to be vigilant for the consequences of that evil policy have not exhausted themselves yet. There is tension and danger still and we cannot relax. Some people talk rather foolishly of war, not perhaps appreciating what this means. Such talk should not be indulged in. But we have to remember that the present situation is full of dangerous possibilities and we have to be prepared for all contingencies.

6 In Kashmir, we have had a remarkable success which is redounding to the credit of our army, air force and airlines. It has also placed before the country a brave example of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh Kashmiris uniting in defence of their homeland under the leadership of an outstanding personality, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. Greater even than the military

⁴ The A.I.C.C. commended the Government's efforts to provide relief and rehabilitation to the refugees and favoured discouragement of large scale migrations.

success has been this psychological triumph which has stemmed the tide of the communal current in India to some extent

7 But it would be folly to imagine that we are out of the wood in Kashmir. Kashmir is vital to us from many points of view. Kashmir is also vital to Pakistan and so there is an inherent conflict in the situation whatever form or shape it might take. In spite of our intense desire that Kashmir should remain with India we have offered a referendum of the people, in pursuance of our general policy.⁵ We are prepared to take that risk rather than abandon our principles. We hope and believe that the referendum will result in Kashmir remaining with India. But it is obvious that no referendum can take place till Kashmir is free of the raider. This may take some months and during these months much may happen which will affect the possibility of a referendum. After all one cannot have it both ways—war and referendum. If a referendum is agreed to then this petty war must end. If this armed struggle continues for sometime then the decision comes through other means than referendum.

8 The present position in Kashmir state is not very satisfactory and large numbers of tribal people and ex servicemen from Pakistan are crossing the Kashmir border into the Poonch areas. In a military sense the problem is not difficult and we shall no doubt deal with it. But owing to the approach of winter and the difficult nature of the terrain it may take us sometime to clear Kashmir wholly of the raiders.

9 The Hyderabad situation has no military significance for us in spite of all manner of alarms. I do not know yet what the result of our talks with the Hyderabad Delegation will be. But in view of the presence of a very bigoted and well armed organisation in Hyderabad there might be some local trouble there.

⁵ Nehru conveyed this offer to Liaquat Ali Khan on 31 October and announced it in a broadcast on 2 November 1947.

arranged between the Prime Ministers of provincial governments and some representatives of the Government of India to discuss this vital problem and to find out a solution by general agreement which can be given effect to cooperatively by the Centre and the provinces alike in full measure

14 I would again draw your attention to the necessity of building up an effective intelligence service. The old intelligence service represented the old regime and is totally unsuited to present conditions. It is therefore to be rebuilt anew with new objectives and methods.

15 There is one matter which I should specially like to mention to you and that is the relation of the Governor and the Ministers in each province. The Governor is a constitutional head now and the burden of responsibility falls on the Ministry. But that certainly does not mean that the Governor should be ignored. As a matter of fact many of the Governors at present are old and valued colleagues of ours. We sent them to the provinces because we wanted to give every help to the provinces. Some of the provinces have in fact profited by the presence of a new Governor a good deal. There has been every cooperation between the Ministry and the Governor and he has been able to help and advise his Ministry. In some cases however the Governor has been rather isolated and the Ministry have not developed the practice of conferring with him, sending papers to him or of taking his advice.⁸ This is very unfortunate and it means our wasting some of our best men when they could be perhaps more usefully employed elsewhere. If we find that a Governor is not being utilised sufficiently in a particular province then we shall have to consider the question of removing him from the province and giving him some more worthwhile work to do.

16 In strict constitutional practice the Governor should be

⁸ For example Jai Ramdas Doulatram, Governor of Bihar, had complained of this.

kept informed of all important happenings and should be consulted by the Prime Minister or other Ministers in regard to every important step taken such as legislation economic policy and the like. We have a tremendous number of difficult problems to face and the Ministry should welcome the help and advice which an experienced and well tried Governor can give. I trust therefore that where there is not this full cooperation between the Governor and the Ministry a change will come about leading to frequent consultation and cooperation.

17 Finally I should like to repeat that the danger to us is not so much external as internal. Reactionary forces and communal organisations are trying to disrupt the structure of free India. They do not realise that if disruption comes they will also be swept away in this process. But of course disruption will not come and we have to meet these reactionary forces squarely and firmly.

18 I regret that some of the Prime Ministers do not write to me regular letters. I am thankful to others who have done so.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
2 December, 1947

My dear Prime Minister

I wrote to you last only ten days ago. Since then events have moved fast and we have taken vital decisions some of which will have the most far reaching effects on our future. There is little doubt that this old country of ours is pulsating with life and however ugly some of the recent manifestations of this energy may have been I feel that we are on the move in a vigorous dynamic way.

2 In my two previous letters I had written to you about Hyderabad and the Ittehad ul Muslemeen. You will now have read in the papers that the Nizam has signed a Standstill Agreement for one year.¹ This is exactly the same agreement as the one which the Chhatari² Delegation had previously executed and the Nizam had gained nothing from his dismissal of Chhatari and the installation in power of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen representatives.³ In retrospect it seems to me that if the Nizam has gained nothing by this it has not been altogether without advantage to us. If the Nizam had signed this agreement when it was presented to him by the Chhatari

1 Under this agreement all existing agreements and administrative arrangements between the two governments of India and Hyderabad were to be continued.

2 Muhammad Ahmed Said Khan, Nawab of Chhatari (1888-1982), Minister of Industries U.P. 1923-25, Home Minister U.P. 1926-33, Prime Minister Hyderabad 1947.

3 Moin Nawaz Jung and Abdur Rahim led the Hyderabad Negotiating Committee.

2 December, 1947

exploratory talks with the Pakistan Ministers on various subjects including Kashmir. Nothing could have been more inauspicious than the beginning of these talks. Liaquat Ali Khan⁴ had sent me, just before he arrived, a copy of a telegram addressed by him to Mr. Attlee⁵ which was most offensive⁶ and I had almost decided that it was no use trying to enter into discussions with him. But when I met him and talked to him, he was not unreasonable and we have made some progress. I shall be going to Lahore on the 8th December for the Joint Defence Council⁷ meeting and I expect to continue my talks then. We are keeping in touch with Sheikh Abdullah.

9 In the meanwhile, there have been discussions on some other highly controversial issues which had been previously remitted to the Arbitral Tribunal.⁸ These discussions were conducted in an atmosphere of cordiality and have resulted in agreements which I regard as eminently satisfactory.⁹ I cannot

4 (1895-1951) General Secretary of the Muslim League from 1936 member of the Interim Government 1946-47 Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1947 till his assassination in 1951

5 C. R. Attlee (1883-1967) British Labour M.P. member of the Indian Statutory (Simon) Commission 1927-30 Deputy Leader of the Opposition 1931-35 and Leader 1935-40 Lord Privy Seal 1940-42 Deputy Prime Minister 1942-45 Prime Minister 1945-51

6 Liaquat Ali Khan, calling Sheikh Abdullah a paid agent of the Congress, expressed surprise that Nehru should proclaim this quisling to be the acknowledged leader of Muslims in Kashmir. He feared that retention of Indian troops in Kashmir would lead to the conversion of the Muslim majority into a minority and sought British support for Pakistan's demand in the United Nations for an international commission to supervise the plebiscite in Kashmir.

7 This was set up on 11 August 1947 for the division of military forces and stores between the two Dominions.

8 This was set up on 12 August 1947 to resolve differences referred to it by the Joint Defence Council or the Partition Councils over the division of assets and liabilities.

9 These related to division of cash balances, Pakistan's repayment of debts, the division of stores and ordnance factories, issues such as unilateral action by Pakistan in levying tax on jute, and division of assets of technical institutions and of bank deposits.

India is relying increasingly on the solid foundation of the will of the people

5 In dealing with this subject in this broad historical perspective I am not ignoring the possibility that there might still be dangers ahead in the immediate future I appreciate that the Ittehad ul Muslemeen which is trying to entrench itself behind a facade of an interim government may precipitate matters internally but I am convinced that any action we may have to take will be what may be called police action not military You will of course continue as we shall here to keep a close watch on developments in Hyderabad

6 The position in Kashmir is broadly speaking much the same as I stated in my last letter One detachment of our forces deploying from Uri has taken Poonch and another deploying from Jammu has taken Kotli I regret however that we were not able to relieve Mirpur which fell to the raiders In the meanwhile the position has somewhat deteriorated in the hinterland of Jammu large numbers of raiders have struck between Jammu and Naushahra there has been much arson and looting and thousands of refugees are streaming across the country We have received reliable information that several thousands of well armed tribesmen have gathered in Gujrat and Jhelum districts and some also in Sialkot

7 We have now reassessed the military situation in Kashmir This was necessary in any case because the immediate objectives which we had planned for originally have been largely gained and we had to consider what next to do Also the onset of winter the extension of our lines of communication the disposition of large numbers of raiders in neighbouring West Punjab districts and the attitude of the people of Poonch towards our Army which has been described as not friendly have all made it necessary to decide on the second phase of our plan

8 You will have seen in the newspapers that we have had

without some misgiving. The issues are highly controversial and over them the press is divided, the public is divided and almost every Cabinet has been divided. But the fact that there have been genuine and sharp differences of opinion did not make a decision any the less urgent. We simply could not evade it and let events overtake us. I am sure that now that a decision has been taken, your government will do everything to implement it faithfully. The greatest single factor that will ensure that the revised policy will conduce to the public interest is the psychological factor, and if you can make the people feel that not only is the policy intended for their benefit but that you are fully confident that it is going to work for their benefit, that will have the greatest possible value.

12 I fully recognise that the decision taken by government entails a certain amount of risk. The new policy is based on the expectation that decontrol would bring out more stocks than at present under control, and that these stocks would be distributed without serious hoarding or profiteering. Only experience will show whether these expectations will be fulfilled or not. If they are, the country would gain immensely, the pace of return to normalcy would be quickened, administrative personnel at present engaged on controls would be released for more urgent and productive tasks, and there would be general public satisfaction. On the other hand, should the shortage in the country be really serious and there should be an increase of hoarding and profiteering on the part of traders and large producers, of panic among consumers, then the consequences would be extremely serious. The economic structure of the country as a whole will be shaken severely. Our plans for the development of the country will suffer a serious setback. In these circumstances, the need for watching developments carefully and keeping prepared against possible emergencies cannot be overemphasised. Specific suggestions have been made regarding the safeguards¹¹ which are necessary for this

11 These were: fixation of basic quotas for surplus areas; a ceiling on import quotas for deficit areas; restriction on inter provincial movement of foodgrains; and continuance of controls on rice, wheat and millets.

account for this change of atmosphere so far as the Pakistan authorities are concerned except I suppose that they now realise that their economy has become shattered and they just cannot afford to have increasing conflict with us

10 Altogether the situation today is much brighter than it was a fortnight or even a week ago I do not think that is merely a fortuitous patch I believe it is a sign that things are definitely taking a turn for the better However it would be disastrous to be complacent and I am not altogether without some apprehension about the tribesmen There is increasing evidence that those of them who have congregated in Gujrat and Jhelum are not amenable to the control of the West Punjab Government and it is by no means unlikely that they may create a problem for us to deal with At a conference I had yesterday with the senior officers of the Defence Services I told them that while war is an evil thing for both victors and vanquished and we must never think in terms of aggression against Pakistan we must be absolutely prepared in case of eventualities and keep our defence services in a state of fighting efficiency There will in the immediate future be no question of demobilisation there may even be if it became necessary a certain degree of remobilisation If Pakistan knows that our defence services are maintained at a high level of efficiency that would by itself prevent any mischief

11 I will now turn to a topic entirely different from the above but none the less pressing and important Your government will have got the circular telegram No 10053 dated the 28th November from our Ministry of Food regarding the revision of the foodgrains policy¹⁰ This is a major step which we have taken after very considerable thought and not altogether

10 The new policy recommended progressive termination of government commitment under rationing instead on local procurement of foodgrains by provinces and allowed provinces to fix procurement prices according to local conditions It also stressed the need for reducing dependence on imports from abroad

New Delhi
7 December, 1947

My dear Prime Minister *

Reports have reached me of big demonstrations organised by the R S S in some provinces. Often these demonstrations have been held in spite of prohibitory orders like Section 144. Some provincial authorities have taken no action in this matter and apparently accepted this defiance of orders. I do not wish to interfere with your discretion in this matter. But I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this acquiescence in defiance is likely to have grave consequences.

2 We have a great deal of evidence to show that the R S S is an organisation which is in the nature of a private army and which is definitely proceeding on the strictest Nazi lines even following the technique of organisation. It is not our desire to interfere with civil liberties. But training in arms of large numbers of persons with the obvious intention of using them is not something that can be encouraged. The fact that the R S S is definitely and deliberately against the present central and provincial governments need not be considered enough for any action to be taken against them and any legitimate propaganda might certainly be allowed. But their activity more and more goes beyond these limits and it is desirable for provincial governments to keep a watchful eye and to take such action as they may deem necessary.

3 Some provincial governments have taken action against

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

purpose in paras 10 to 12 of the circular telegram to which I would draw your particular attention

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
19 December 1947

My dear Premier

I have addressed you hitherto as Prime Minister but today I am addressing you as Premier. This is in accordance with the proposal which was conveyed to you in previous correspondence from my Secretariat and which was agreed to by all the provincial heads of Cabinet who replied. One of them was in fact somewhat indignant with me the other day that I continued to address him as Prime Minister!

2 I have just returned from a brief tour of Allahabad Cawnpore and Calcutta. For me it has been an unforgettable experience. I saw hundreds of thousands of faces—there were 10 lakhs on the Calcutta *maidan* alone—all so eager, so full of occasion. Looking at those faces I felt reassured that the Congress continues to draw its strength from the heart of the people and in spite of all the travails through which we have gone the Congress message continues to find a ready response from them. It is good to know this. But along with this sense of gratification I felt an immense and almost overpowering sense of responsibility. Many of the bodies were weak and emaciated and the clothes were tattered and these millions look to us with a faith which is almost childlike in its simplicity to give them food, clothing and shelter. We have in the past in taking part in the political fight against the British rule been in continuous touch with this emaciation and this misery which have in fact been the driving force of our activity. But we can no longer now that we are in the seats of power afford any delay in the

periodicals for promoting hatred between communities. Probably the newspapers of the R S S are more to blame in this matter than any other newspapers or periodicals outside Pakistan. It is amazing how they carry on this communal propaganda in its extremist form.

4 I have some knowledge of the way the Nazi movement developed in Germany. It attracted by its superficial trappings and strict discipline considerable numbers of lower middle class young men and women who are normally not too intelligent and for whom life appeared to offer little to attract them. And so they drifted towards the Nazi party because its policy and programme such as they were were simple negative and did not require an active effort of the mind. The Nazi party brought Germany to ruin and I have little doubt that if these tendencies are allowed to spread and increase in India they would do enormous injury to India. No doubt India would survive. But she would be grievously wounded and would take a long time to recover.

5 Our young men now full of vitality find few outlets for this vitality and so they drift towards wrong channels. This is a serious matter for the future of the country and we cannot look on silently while this is happening. It is of course completely opposed to Congress policy in the past or in the present. Unfortunately a number of Congressmen without thinking are attracted to this development of fascist and Nazi modes of thought and practice. I have ventured therefore to draw your attention to this for we will ignore it at our peril.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

pledged to give effect to them as speedily as possible

4 As I informed you in my letter of the 15th October, we have appointed here a Cabinet sub committee to go into economic questions and I suggest it would be a good idea if you had a similar sub committee of your Cabinet to discuss economic problems in so far as they affect your province. Ministers tend to get submerged in the affairs of day to day administration. These affairs are important enough but it seems to me of the greatest importance that some at least of the Ministers must be in a position to devote continuous thought to the question of ways and means of fulfilling the primary economic functions of government. It is necessary also as I explained in my speech to the Associated Chambers that we must deal with these problems with the same sense of urgency as in the event of war.

5 The recent strike of government servants in Madras⁵ illustrates very sharply the difficulties we are in and the dangers we shall have to face if we do not give close thought to the economic consequences of State action in various fields. There has been a sharp rise in the cost of living in Madras. This has happened elsewhere but the rise in Madras has been somewhat sharper than in the rest of the country and the effect on the salaried classes there has undoubtedly been severe. The difficulty has probably been accentuated by the fact that salaries in Madras have tended to be on the low side. The Madras Government are anxious to deal fairly with their employees but are hamstrung by their financial difficulties. In a recent letter to me the Madras Premier wrote as follows:

solution of this problem. That would be a betrayal of a trust, and it would spell disaster on the country.

3 The Central Government has during the last few days been thinking more and more of this basic problem of poverty — which we had temporarily put in a second place amidst the preoccupations of communal disorder. You may have noticed from the papers that I spoke at length to the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta and I stressed that the sole test of our economic policy by whatever name it is called is the raising of the level of the common man.¹ Our Industries Minister² has also been having an Industries Conference one of whose primary tasks is to suggest ways and means of stepping up the production of various commodities of primary importance both immediately and in the long run.³ This conference was very representative of all the various interests concerned and it achieved a remarkable success which is full of promise for the future. Representatives of capital and labour as well as of the provincial governments and states decided unanimously to observe a three year truce in industry — no lock-outs strikes etc — and to have a machinery for the settlement of industrial disputes.⁴ I would particularly draw your attention to all the resolutions of this conference as they are of far reaching importance. The Central and provincial governments are

1 In his address on 15 December 1947 Nehru had said that there would be no special privileges accorded to foreign business interests and the basic economic and social structure must reflect the changing world conditions. The real test of any policy was to see "how the millions of Indians would benefit or prosper from it."

2 Syama Prasad Mookerjee (1901-53) Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University 1934-38, joined Hindu Mahasabha 1939 and resigned from it 1948. Union Minister for Industry and Supply 1947-50, founder of the Jan Sangh 1952, died in detention in Kashmir.

3 The conference which met at New Delhi from 15 to 18 December 1947 passed resolutions on increasing transport capacity, fuller utilization of raw materials, central planning and development of cottage industries as necessary prerequisites to increase production.

4 The resolution was passed on 18 December 1947 after Nehru's address to the conference.

bill is about 24 crores. New schemes which had to be sanctioned in the course of the year cost another crore. The Special Police Force units and the Home Guards and Civic Guards proposed to be started will cost the government another three crores with the result that the salary bill of the government will be almost equal to the revenues leaving no money for nation building activities or other ameliorative measures.

This is a serious situation. The Madras Government feel that if their employees do not call off the strike, they must face it resolutely and not yield to their threats. This, of course, is right but something more may have to be done. In any case, it seems necessary that each provincial government should review its financial position carefully particularly in regard to schemes of social reform which they may have in contemplation involving immediate loss of revenue. You will recollect that in a letter dated the 15th November I particularly stressed the importance of consulting my Finance Ministry on such proposals.

6 While on this subject of economic conditions in the country I would like to draw your attention to the problem of the Grow More Food Campaign.⁶ An officer of our Ministry of Agriculture has started on a tour of various provinces with a view to ascertaining why this campaign was such a failure and what can be done to get it going again on the right lines.⁷ That it has been a failure is a fact which I fear admits of no doubt.

6 Fearing that rice from Burma would not be available during the Second World War the Indian Government launched this campaign in April 1942. After the War the Interim Government decided in September 1946 to continue with the campaign for another five years.

7 Reviewing the campaign in September 1947 the Food Grains Committee suggested that greater attention be paid to minor irrigation, local manure, distribution of improved seeds, reclamation of land and setting up of village panchayats and cooperatives so that the targets in food production could be achieved.

areas brought under their administrative control are brought up as rapidly as possible to at least the level obtaining in the provincial areas

9. I had written to you in my letter of the 2nd November regarding Home Guards. I have not yet been able to get a clear picture of what is actually being done. One province speaks of 2500 Home Guards, another of 1200 in the provincial capital and a couple of thousands in the districts, and a third speaks of a scheme for training a million Home Guards in a year. The selection, training and disposition of these guards is a matter of the utmost importance, and I hope you will keep me and the Home Ministry informed in some detail of what you have actually achieved in your province and what your further plans are.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

into Sialkot and there they are being grouped, trained and kept in formation with the obvious connivance of Pakistan officials. We must presume that the Pakistan Government is directly encouraging this heavy infiltration of tribesmen and others on the Kashmir Jammu border, but there is also evidence that to some extent these people are getting somewhat out of hand and the Pakistan authorities are not finding it too easy to control them. From the merely military point of view, the Army authorities are satisfied that they have enough resources to hold the position, but it would be ignoring the realities of the situation to expect any spectacular military success in the winter. In the meanwhile, I have received a telegram from Liaquat Ali Khan which, in its tone, is in marked contrast to his previous effusions and expresses the desire for a peaceful and honourable settlement.⁸ Nevertheless, the activities of the Pakistan authorities in regard to Kashmir belie this approach and we have to give serious thought to our future course of action. The gap between us is so wide at present that it is difficult to see on what basis a settlement can be made in the near future. However, he will be seeing me in Delhi next week and we shall go into the matter further.

8 I have written to you more than once of the steadily increasing political consolidation of the country. This process took a further march last week in the shape of agreements between the States Ministry and certain rulers of the eastern states and the Chhattisgarh states in central and eastern India.⁹ The incorporation of large numbers of states which for centuries had been subjected to autocratic and tyrannical misrule into the administrative framework of provinces is a welcome political development. At the same time, it imposes a heavy obligation on the provinces concerned to see that the new

⁸ He cabled to Nehru on 16 December 1947 that the problem of Kashmir can only be solved by an act of statesmanship and not by legal disputations as to how Pakistan is party to the dispute or how U.N.O. can be brought in.

⁹ Agreements were signed on 14 December 1947 for the merger of the eastern states in Orissa province and of Chhattisgarh states in the Central Province.

is dark ¹ In Indonesia, there is a continuing struggle and freedom is not yet assured ² In Palestine, there is organised religious conflict on an intensive scale, probably the prelude to large scale disorder and battle ³ In India, we have military operations going on in Kashmir, in fact a little war is being waged even though it might not have been declared to be so

4 The outlook the world over is also not promising and at no time since the last World War have relations been so strained between the U S A and the U S S R and their respective blocs People talk complacently of another war coming and prepare for it The outlook is not bright yet I do not think that any war on a large scale is likely to take place in the near future

5 For us in India the Kashmir issue has become dominating Indeed this has been raised to an international level by our reference to the Security Council of the United Nations and most of the great powers are intensely interested in what happens in Kashmir because of its strategic position ⁴ The course of military operations in Kashmir has not always been

1 The civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communists had been raging since 1927 except during the years 1937-45 when both parties had formed a united front to fight the Japanese By December 1947 the Communists had acquired control over large parts of Manchuria

2 Indonesia a Dutch colony since 1816 was occupied by the Japanese from 1941 to 1945 After the Japanese surrender the Indonesian Nationalist Party declared an independent Republic and had to fight the Dutch who were determined to return In January 1948 the Dutch made fresh proposals to the Republicans for a settlement

3 Jewish and Arab extremists were involved in acts of terrorism after the United Nations decision on 29 November 1947 to partition Palestine, a territory administered under a mandate by the British since 1920 The mandate ended on 14 May 1948

4 On 31 December 1947 the Government of India requested the Security Council to call on Pakistan immediately to stop giving assistance to the invaders in Kashmir since it was an act of aggression against India If Pakistan did not desist from such action the Government of India might be compelled in self defence to enter Pakistan territory to take military action against the invaders

New Delhi
5 January 1948

My dear Premier

I am sorry for the slight delay in sending you my forthrightly letter. I have been out of Delhi during the past few days visiting Lucknow Jaipur and Ajmer

2 This is my first letter in the New Year. Inevitably on such an occasion one looks both back and forward. We have had a tough time during these past few months but I think any impartial judge will say that we have dealt with the situation with courage and with a measure of success. Taking an overall view of the situation it can definitely be stated that in spite of difficulties we are stronger and more firmly established than some months ago. We have to be vigilant and be prepared for all consequences. At the same time we are confident that we have the strength the resources and the will to overcome the dangers and difficulties that surround us. It is on this note of confidence that I wish you and your colleagues and your government not just a happy New Year because that would be a banal phrase but rather a New Year of fulfilment and achievement a New Year of service to the nation and to the common man in India

3 Yesterday we celebrated the independence of the new Republic of the Union of Burma. That event was undoubtedly of great significance to us and to Asia. Through travail and sorrow Asia forges ahead. In China a civil war rages and the future

7 In view of the dangerous implications of the situation on our frontiers it is of particular importance that there should be peace and order everywhere in India and that there should in particular be no communal trouble. Any communal disturbances will weaken our front against the enemy and discredit us before the United Nations. All those therefore who preach communal hatred are doing a very grave disservice to the country. You will always remember that this Kashmir affair is not essentially a communal affair and that we are fighting side by side there with the Kashmir national movement under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. It may also interest you to know that one of the Brigadiers in charge of our forces in the Jammu province is a Muslim officer.⁸ He was asked for by name by the Commanding General who is a Sikh⁹ and I have been told that he has displayed great keenness and ability in his work. Communal trouble in India reacts unfavourably on the Kashmir situation as well as on the all India situation. We cannot and must not do what Pakistan does in its territory. At present, the position of Hindus and Sikhs in Sind is becoming very difficult¹⁰ and we are trying to organise their evacuation as methodically as possible. The Hindus in East Bengal are also in a bad way though there have been no major occurrences there. The well to do classes have left and those who remain are poor and weak and without much local leadership.

8 Muslim communalism in India is too weak now to raise its head though undoubtedly there are elements of mischief still present in India. Muslim communalism functions now as a

8 Brigadier Muhammad Usman was killed in action in July 1948

9 Major General Kulwant Singh (1905-1966) Commander Jammu and Kashmir Armed Forces November 1947-May 1948 Chief of General Staff 1948-50 G.O.C. in Chief Western Command 1955-59

10 Despite assurances of the Pakistan Government of protection to the minorities the non-Muslims in Sind were being subjected to communal attacks and discriminatory service conditions. Those allowed to migrate were subjected to rigorous and harassing searches and severe restrictions were imposed on the migration of certain groups such as washermen and sweepers.

satisfactory and there have been some petty setbacks. Recently, however, our troops have given a very severe hammering to the invaders. Our morale has gone up and no doubt the morale of the enemy has gone down to some extent. As I informed you in my last letter, we are dealing with this Kashmir issue in all seriousness and taking such steps as we may consider necessary to provide for future developments.

6 We have referred the Kashmir issue to the Security Council of the United Nations and my colleague Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar,⁵ together with Shri Motilal Setalvad,⁶ will represent us at the hearing of this Council. We have done so because we wanted to avoid, in so far as this was possible, any development which would lead to war between the two Dominions. War is never to be lightly thought of though sometimes it becomes inevitable. So while on the one hand, we have taken all necessary precautions military and other, on the other hand, we have requested the Security Council to call upon the Pakistan Government to refrain from helping and encouraging invaders. Our reference is a limited one but the Pakistan Government evidently wishes to bring in all manner of things which have nothing to do with Kashmir.⁷ It is possible that the Security Council may send a Commission to India in the near future for an enquiry on the spot.

5 (1882-1953) Prime Minister of Kashmir 1937-43 Union Minister without Portfolio 1947-48 leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations 1948 Minister for Railways and Transport 1950-52 and Defence 1952-53

6 (1884-1974) Advocate General Bombay 1937-42 member Indian delegation to the United Nations 1947-49 and 1952 Attorney General of India 1950-62 Member Rajya Sabha 1966-72

7 In reply to India's charge the Pakistan Government demanded that India be asked to withdraw her troops from Kashmir and a commission appointed to hold a plebiscite through an impartial administration. India should also vacate Junagadh, Manavadar, Mangrol and other smaller places in Kathiawar; an enquiry be conducted into the condition of Muslims in India and the Indian Government asked to implement all financial agreements between the two countries.

5 January 1948

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spread out effort which does not yield results. Rehabilitation on a large scale offers an excellent opportunity for economic planning. Economic issues are of course always before us and recently they have become very pressing. We must deal with them as a whole and lay down definite policies.

11 Recently at a conference held in Delhi it was decided to have a three year truce between labour and capital and to concentrate on production as well as of course equitable distribution. This was a great achievement but unfortunately there have been labour troubles since then.¹² I earnestly hope that these troubles were temporary phenomena and that the conception of industrial truce will prevail.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

¹² For example the dockyard and port trust workers in Bombay struck work demanding higher wages. The workers in Kanpur also observed a strike on 2 January 1948 to press their demand for leave with pay and this was followed by an indefinite strike of the workers in the Kanpur textile mills.

State in Pakistan Within India the communalism we have to deal with today is essentially Hindu and Sikh communalism which has lately become more and more aggressive and intolerant The R S S has played an important part in recent developments and evidence has been collected to implicate it in certain very horrible happenings It is openly stated by their leaders that the R S S is not a political body but there can be no doubt that their policy and programme are political intensely communal and based on violent activities They have to be kept in check and we must not be misled by their pious professions which are completely at variance with their policy

9 The problem of rehabilitation of the vast number of refugees from Pakistan must be considered as one having the highest priority ¹¹ Not only have we to prevent as far as we can human suffering but we have also to prevent large number of embittered people who have lost much, from becoming homeless wanderers Even from the point of view of the security of the State this is undesirable Among these people there are many who could serve the State with distinction given the chance in various fields of constructive activities We cannot lose this fund of ability Others also have to be made into productive citizens of India and given opportunities of progress

10 In regard to this question of rehabilitation two points must be clearly borne in mind Firstly that it is a colossal problem and requires the fullest cooperation of the whole of India in solving it This necessitates cooperation and coordination under central direction Secondly in facing any big problem it is necessary to have priorities laid down Otherwise an attempt to do everything at the same time meets with failure all along the line Something definitely achieved is of greater help in the next steps than a

11 The Government of India communique on 1 January 1948 stated that by December 1947 43 62 000 non Muslim refugees had migrated to India Of these about 20 lakhs had settled in East Punjab and the Indian states and 12 5 lakhs had been accommodated in 160 refugee camps all over the country

which the man in the street understood and wholly sympathised with. His recent fast in Calcutta³ was also for an easily understood purpose which had the support of the overwhelming bulk of the people. The fast which he has now undertaken is less easy for the general public to understand and in fact there are sections of them more particularly among the refugees who do not sympathise with it and are in a sense antagonistic to it.⁴ Therein lies its significance and supreme courage.

3 We are faced particularly in East Punjab and Delhi with the psychological problem created by the events of the last few months. These have created in the minds of people not merely among the refugees but also among others a bitterness, a sense of desperation and a desire for retaliation—in short a serious spiritual malaise. This is wholly understandable but nonetheless extremely dangerous. We have all of us done our best to cure it but have not succeeded except only to a limited extent. The difficulties have been partly due to our inability effectively to tackle the problem of rehabilitation about which I shall write further in this letter and partly to the continuing evidence of hostility and barbaric conduct towards the minorities in Pakistan. The result has been that sections of the Hindu community are not in tune with and do not understand Gandhiji's approach to the Muslim problem in India. They resent his approach and think that it is somehow or other inimical to their own interests. And yet any person with vision can see that Gandhiji's approach is not only morally correct but is also essentially practical. Indeed it is the only possible

3 He began a fast on 1 September 1947 to draw attention to the need to protect the Muslims and broke it after 73 hours when he was satisfied that conditions in Calcutta had returned to normal.

4 On 14 January 1948 some demonstrators at Birla House in Delhi where Gandhi was fasting had shouted 'Let Gandhi Die'. There were demonstrations in other parts of Delhi also against what was thought to be his policy of appeasement towards the Muslims. At some places peace marches for communal harmony were attacked.

New Delhi
17 January, 1948

My dear Premier,

Since I last wrote to you everything that has happened has been completely overshadowed by Gandhiji's fast¹ It has come on us suddenly and stunned many even of us who know him well I am writing this letter with a prayer in my heart—which I have not ceased to make ever since I first heard of the fast—that we may be spared the supreme tragedy It is not necessary that I should write and explain to you the significance which Gandhiji attaches to the fast, he has done it himself and it is impossible for others however closely associated with him to interpret his unique approach any more clearly than he can There is however, one aspect which may be useful for me to mention particularly to those Premiers who are far removed from the gruesome events of Punjab and Delhi

2 *The last prolonged fast which Gandhiji undertook was in 1943 when he was a prisoner*² That fast was for a purpose

1 Mahatma Gandhi undertook a fast from 13 January which as he put it was his address to the conscience of all communities in both the Dominions where the communal situation was growing worse Gandhiji was also distressed over the Indian Cabinet's decision to withhold payment of Rs 55 crores payable to Pakistan as assets of partition until the settlement of Kashmir as it feared that Pakistan would purchase arms with that amount to sustain fighting in Kashmir Gandhiji broke the fast on 18 January when the representatives of various organisations and communities in Delhi gave an assurance that peace and amity would be ensured in the Capital and after the Indian Cabinet decided to release the amount to Pakistan

2 For 21 days from 10 February 1943 in Aga Khan Palace at Pune

insulted and often pushed out of their houses. This is not done by the Sindhi Muslims with whom they have had friendly relations but by vast hordes of Muslim refugees from the Punjab who continue to pour in. We have now to arrange for the wholesale evacuation from Sind by the non Muslims. Over 400 000 have already left but a million still remain.

7 In the Gujrat train tragedy the initiative appears to have been taken by the Frontier tribal people and Pathans who swarm all over West Punjab now. The train was bringing Hindus from Bannu. The actual deaths were about 300 but many are still missing. After the tragedy the Pakistan Government took energetic steps to give relief. Law and order have ceased to function in the northern and eastern districts of West Punjab and the Pathans there ignore the administration.

8 We have in the last few days begun to devote increasing attention to the problem of rehabilitation. Amidst the preoccupations caused by the task of evacuating several million people I am afraid we did not devote to the subject all the attention that it deserved. Any further delay in tackling it is likely to lead to disastrous consequences. In Delhi city alone the vast number of refugees numbering about 4 50 000 has become a tremendous problem and lately there have been disturbances. In East Punjab while the provincial government has achieved a considerable measure of success in some respects a very great deal still remains to be done. It is doubtful if the resources of East Punjab Government are sufficient for the purpose of tackling this problem and it is necessary that every province in India should also cooperate. Essentially therefore it is a matter for central direction and central planning. We must devise a machinery which could tackle the problem rapidly effectively and on a planned basis. Vision is necessary and there must be a note of urgency about the work.

9 The Cabinet has appointed a sub committee with the following terms of reference

approach if we think in terms of the nation's good both from the short and long distance points of view. Any other approach means perpetuating conflict and postponing all notions of national consolidation and progress.

4 This is not the occasion to analyse—no one can analyse them—the complex of urges which must have driven Gandhiji to take this supreme step but quite clearly its main purpose is to make the majority community in India search its heart and purge itself of hatred and the desire to retaliate. In the atmosphere in which it has been undertaken it displays a degree of heroism of which only Gandhiji is capable. The ordeal has been made worse for him by the tragic events that have occurred in Pakistan in the last few days—the murder and wholesale looting in Karachi⁵ and the revolting attack on a non-Muslim refugee train in Gujrat in West Punjab.⁶ But these incidents in Gandhiji's conception are not merely wholly irrelevant but only increase the urgency of the step that he has taken.

5 I am sure you will mobilise all your resources to emphasise to the people of your province by every possible means the meaning and purpose of the fast and thus help to create a situation in which Gandhiji may break it. I regard the emergency created by the fast as at least as grave as the disease that has given rise to it and if we do not go all out to meet it history will not forgive us.

6 The Karachi killings and looting have brought to a final crisis the problem of non-Muslims in Sind. There is at present no place for Hindus in Sind. Even if they suffer no bodily injury it is impossible for them to lead normal or secure lives or to carry on their professions or avocations. They are harassed and

5 On 6 January communal riots broke out in Karachi in which a number of non-Muslims were killed and their properties seized.

6 A train with 2,400 refugees en route from Bannu to Gujranwala was attacked on 12 January 1948. Complicity of the railway staff was suspected.

We do not propose, however, to do this pending developments in the Security Council

11 Developments in Hyderabad have caused us a good deal of anxiety. You will have seen references in the newspapers both to the currency ordinance which the state has issued⁸ and to the loan of securities for Rs 20 crores to Pakistan⁹. Recently it was announced by the state government that the Nizam has sanctioned with retrospective effect a pension to Mr Ghulam Mohammed¹⁰. By itself this is a trivial matter but the fact that the announcement has been made just at this stage is not without significance. There are also reports of border incidents: there was a serious one a couple of days ago when state troops entered our border in Madras and indulged in looting and destruction of houses and carried away a couple of people¹¹. There was an earlier border incident in which the state police shot two of our people. We have reliable information to show that the Ittehad ul Muslemeen is in close touch with Mr Jinnah and doubtless derives considerable inspiration from him. It is necessary for all of us to be alert in regard to Hyderabad and I can assure you that we in Delhi are keeping a very close watch on the situation there. At the same time we cannot afford to take precipitate action which might make matters worse at a time when we are heavily committed elsewhere.

12 The Madras Government has been pressing us for a large number of rifles for their police units and Home Guards particularly for those intended to protect the Hyderabad border. Several other provinces have also been making similar

8 On 21 December 1947 the Nizam's Government made the use of state currency obligatory and declared all other currencies illegal.

9 This was confirmed by the Nizam's Government on 10 January 1948.

10 (1895-1956) Finance Minister of Hyderabad state 1942-45. Finance Minister of Pakistan 1947-51. Governor General of Pakistan 1951-55.

11 The incident took place on 1 January 1948 in Tiruvur village in the Krishna District.

- (a) To survey the problem of rehabilitation of refugees coming from Western Pakistan more specially those coming from urban areas
- (b) To lay down the general lines of policy and to make recommendations for an overall planned system of rehabilitation
- (c) To suggest the machinery necessary to ensure putting into effect this general plan, and
- (d) To examine the financial implications of such a plan both in the Centre and in the provinces and states concerned

The committee will naturally consult the provincial and state governments concerned before finalising its recommendations. When you are consulted I am sure you will deal with the matter as one of top priority. It is proposed to have a high powered Development and Rehabilitation Board with a Rehabilitation Commissioner with wide powers for planning and execution.

10 The military situation in Kashmir has shown further improvement since I last wrote to you. Our troops have undertaken vigorous offensive patrols in several directions and have penetrated deep into the territory occupied by the raiders, causing severe casualties to them. For the moment it looks as if the raiders do not want to risk a head on offensive and things are in fact exceptionally quiet in several sectors of the front. But this may be a mere lull, and in any case our main military problem remains unchanged, namely, that the enemy have a series of strong bases inside the Pakistan frontier from which they can launch attacks at virtually any point of our extended lines of communication and to which they can retire easily for recuperation and reinforcement. You will have noticed that in our reference to the Security Council, we have taken the line that it is open to us to hit these bases inside Pakistan territory⁷.

⁷ Gopalaswami Ayyangar informed the Security Council on 15 January 1948 that India could handle the Kashmir issue in an exclusively military way but "would like to exhaust every possible resource for avoiding war."

market I do not know and probably no one does. But clearly we must reckon so far as the wage earning and the salaried classes are concerned with an increase in the cost of living. This increase has been going on for some time quite apart from decontrol. Between November and the third week of December the general index figure went up from 296.7 to 317.7 (about 7%). Food prices alone have gone up about 8%. I hope you have set up within your Cabinet a sub-committee which studies these matters closely. I fear we will have to face many more squalls before we settle down.

15 You will have read the decision of the Government of India to implement immediately the financial agreement between India and Pakistan by paying to the latter Rs 55 crores minus certain sums which have to be set off against this.¹⁵ This decision was undoubtedly taken under the influence of Gandhi's fast though the fast itself had nothing to do with it. To some this may appear a quixotic gesture. But I am convinced that it was not only the right thing to do in the circumstances but eminently wise from the larger point of view of India's good. It shows to the world on what high plane India functions. A little more or less money does not make much difference in national conflicts but it does make a great deal of difference how a nation behaves even in the midst of crisis. It must be borne in mind that this decision does not alter in the slightest degree our resolve to stand by the people of Jammu and Kashmir state and redeem the pledge we have given them. Indeed we have taken this step in order to strengthen our position in Kashmir and the struggle that is going on there.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

15 This was announced on 15 January 1948.

demands, the total amounting to nearly 200,000 rifles. We have so far been able to despatch 60,000 rifles to all provinces but there is still a very considerable deficit. We are doing our best to recondition certain army rifles which, we think, may be used by the police and are taking steps to import a large number. In view, however, of supply difficulties from other countries this might take some time but I would like to assure you that we are dealing with this matter as one of great urgency.

13 I am sure you are keeping a very close watch on the situation created by the policy of decontrol of food. You will recollect that in my letter dated 2 December 1947 I emphasised the importance of doing this so that, if the situation deteriorated, you could retrace your steps. There is one province which has already got into some difficulties over this.¹² They have derationed almost the whole province and have given up monopoly procurement except in a small area. This means that the government will not get into its hands the surplus of surplus producers in the rest of the province and that the unrationed rural population will now have to rely on the law of demand and supply to get their food. The total production in the province this year is smaller than normal owing to the failure of the monsoon and it is feared that the consequences are likely to be serious. The matter is engaging the attention of our Food Ministry and appropriate advice is shortly being given to the province. But this example illustrates the necessity of not taking decontrol steps faster than we can retrace them, if necessary.

14 Speaking of the country as a whole, it is too early yet to assess with any accuracy the effect of decontrol. But the indications are that prices have been going up compared with control prices but are substantially less than the black market prices. What proportion of the population depended on the black

¹² The Madras province

there are people in this country who have adopted this method to gain political ends is of the gravest import. Perhaps we have been too lenient in dealing with these various elements in the country. We have suffered for that. But it is time that we gripped the problem fully and dealt with it adequately. There can be no half measures.

It would appear that a deliberate *coup d'etat* was planned involving the killing of several persons and the promotion of general disorder to enable the particular group concerned to seize power. The conspiracy appears to have been a fairly widespread one spreading to some of the states. It is not proper for me now to say much more about this except to warn you of its widespread ramifications.

I am and have been a believer in civil liberty and the democratic processes but it is absurd to talk of democracy when the very basis of it is challenged by terroristic activities. It is equally absurd for civil liberty to be granted to those who wish to seize power by murder and violence. Therefore we are compelled to take action to restrict certain liberties of groups and individuals in order that the people generally should not be deprived of all liberty. I will suggest to you therefore to take every possible step to meet this grave situation and to root out the evil that confronts us. We must remember that the people opposed to us are thoroughly unscrupulous. They will say one thing and do another. I have had messages of condolence from some persons of note who are believed to be associated in this conspiracy. I cannot therefore just take any person's word for granted. It is fairly well known that attempts have been made and these have met with some success in having cells of these conspirators in all manner of governmental places, services etc. We shall have to purge these and purify our administration and services.

The popular reaction to the murder is understandable.⁴ It was scandalous in the extreme that any person in India should

⁴ There were violent demonstrations all over India against members of the R S S and Hindu Mahasabha and attacks on their offices.

New Delhi
5 February, 1948

My dear Premier

When I wrote to you last Gandhi was in the middle of his fast. A little more than two weeks have elapsed since then, and yet it seems as if it was distant ages ago, for so much has happened and all of us have experienced shock and unutterable pain¹. The suddenness and magnitude of what has happened benumbed us for a while and yet we felt immediately that we have to take action and swift action.

You are already aware of some action that we have taken. You must have seen the resolution issued by the Government of India on this tragedy² and know that we have banned the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh organisation³. Investigations are proceeding. But enough has come to light already to show that this assassination was not the act of just an individual or even a small group. It is clear that behind him lay a fairly widespread organisation and deliberate propaganda of hate and violence carried on for a long time. It is significant that for the first time after a long period we should have political assassination in India and that too on the highest level. Even apart from Gandhi's death by such assassination the fact that

1 Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January 1948.

2 These resolutions issued on 2 February 1948 while declaring that no quarter would be given to any organisation encouraging violence and communal hatred urged the people to assist the government in fighting such forces which had put an end to the most precious treasure that India possessed.

3 It was declared an unlawful body on 4 February 1948 for the alleged involvement of its members in acts of communal violence and terrorism.

without any personal considerations coming into the picture. Many of us have worked together for a quarter of a century or more and have gone through all manner of perils and dangers together. It is fantastic to imagine that we are so little minded as to put our personal selves above the country. Each one of us has undertaken this heavy responsibility because of a sense that duty must be performed. Now when Gandhiji is dead, it is all the more incumbent upon all of us to subordinate our little selves and work together for the country's good. We propose to do so in whatever sphere of activity we may be.

Gandhiji has gone and now it becomes more evident than ever what a tremendous stabilising influence he has been in all our problems. We have the mounting economic difficulty—falling production, rising prices and a general disequilibrium. We have strikes and lock outs, we have communalism which hides itself under the cloak of nationalism. We have the Indian states. There has been rapid movement and change in the states and schemes of merger have been put through in regard to the many of the minor states.⁷ Hyderabad remains a problem, not only in regard to its relations with India but also because of its internal set up. It is an extraordinary combination of mediaeval autocracy and rabid communalism right in the heart of the country. It is patent that it cannot continue in this fashion. Trouble has occurred on the borders of Hyderabad and there has been some excitement about this. We have naturally to be prepared for all consequences. But there is no reason why we should grow excited over petty border troubles and disputes. We must see things in proper perspective or else our picture will be wrong. Violent action in the political field always precipitates a situation which otherwise might take time to come to a head. So the assassination of Gandhiji has accelerated many changes. There is tense anxiety as to what

7 Thirteen Deccan states including Sangli and Miraj agreed to merge with Bombay province. The rulers of Bundelkhand in Central India proposed to form a united state of Bundelkhand and 449 territorial units in Kathiawar to merge into a united state of Kathiawar.

have the temerity and the meanness to celebrate by distribution of sweets or by slogans the assassination of Gandhiji.⁵ If the mass of the people resented this and took action of their own accord I can understand it and even appreciate it to some extent. But it is clear that any widespread disorder plays into the hands of our enemies and weakens such action as government might take and are taking. Unfortunately some people have encouraged this disorder and rather exploited it for particular purposes. While one can understand spontaneous action for a while one cannot appreciate the exploitation of this sentiment. This kind of thing can only lead to civil strife on a large scale and a confusion of issues. We have many currents and cross currents agitating the stream of Indian life today. The ending of British rule released many forces and we saw the terrible Punjab disaster. Some of these forces gathered strength exploiting that disaster and they have now done this evil deed. The death of Mahatma Gandhi who was the tremendous cementing force of India has again weakened our political and social fabric. At this moment the first essential is that we must hold together and subordinate our minor differences in order to face the common peril.

May I mention here a personal matter? It has distressed me greatly that a whispering campaign should go on sometimes encouraged by those who should know better to the effect that there are great differences in the Central Cabinet and that all manner of manoeuvres and intrigues go on.⁶ Certain differences in outlook or opinion or approach which exist in every set of human beings have been magnified out of all proportion and attempts have been made to exploit these rumours and allegations. I want to assure you that all this is grossly exaggerated and that the Central Cabinet is going to face this crisis jointly and with the single desire to serve the country.

5 The press had carried reports of such actions in Gwalior, Delhi and some other places.

6 Nehru and Patel had differed over the authority of the office of Prime Minister but bearing in mind Mahatma Gandhi's last advice had agreed to face together as friends and colleagues the situation created by Mahatma Gandhi's death.

The Kashmir issue in the Security Council has given us a great deal of trouble. The military situation has not changed much. But I must confess that the attitude of the great powers has been astonishing.⁹ Some of them have shown active partisanship for Pakistan. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, a man of sound and balanced judgment, has more than once telegraphed to me his disgust at the fact that the Kashmir question is not being discussed fairly and that considerable pressure is being brought to bear against India. This is another heavy burden which we have to bear. Our experience of international politics and the way things are done in these higher regions of the United Nations has been disappointing in the extreme. No doubt all this will affect our international relations in the future. I might inform you that while we have tried and shall continue to try to have a peaceful settlement, we have no intention whatever of giving in on the fundamental points. We can not betray the Kashmir people who have put their trust in us and we cannot surrender to gangsterism.

We have recently had a Governors' Conference here and the discussions were interesting and fruitful.¹⁰ I had occasion to meet many of the Governors separately and discussed provincial matters with them as well as all India matters. Naturally no decisions could be arrived at in the absence of the Premiers of the provinces. I have no doubt that the Governors will inform you of the trend of our discussions.

We have decided to form a Rehabilitation and Development Board with large powers. This will function for the whole of

9 The British and the American delegates, in particular, at the instance of Pakistan, had turned India's specific complaint into a larger question of India-Pakistan relations and insisted on India's withdrawing her troops. Sheikh Abdullah's government being replaced by an impartial neutral administration and a plebiscite being conducted under the auspices of the United Nations.

10 The conference of Governors on 2 February 1948 discussed such questions as the relationship between Governors and their ministries; the mode of selecting Governors under the proposed Constitution; the role of communal organisations; the training of Home Guards and the rehabilitation of refugees.

might happen next. In this state of affairs the heads of governments and their colleagues must keep cool and at the same time vigilant. They must take action rapidly and they must not allow any complacency to delay action. The army above all has to play an important role when violence is threatened. We know that many attempts have been made to tamper with the army but we also know that the army has withstood these attempts and is a magnificent force, disciplined and loyal to the government.

There is a strong opinion in the country, with which I sympathise, that no political religious organisation or rather no organisation confined to a particular religious group and aiming at political ends should be allowed to function. We have suffered enough from this type of communalism whether it is Muslim or Hindu or Sikh. This matter will have to be considered carefully. I do not want of course to suppress any legitimate political activity. But the combination of political activity with a religious group is a dangerous one as we know from experience. You will have to give thought to this matter as to what should be done.

It is clear that a good part of our troubles are due to a thoroughly irresponsible press. I do not of course refer to the many responsible organs of public opinion. But in recent months especially a spate of thoroughly irresponsible sheets have come out and they spread hatred, communal bitterness and the cult of violence. This must be ended. Some of our processes to deal with such papers are slow. They have to be speeded up.⁸

Today more than ever we have to rely on proper intelligence. We are dealing with secret and underground people who have no scruples. I trust therefore that you will pay special attention to the development of an intelligence organisation. In this matter care has to be taken that the wrong kind of person is not kept in it. It has come to our knowledge that some of our intelligence officers are not wholly reliable.

⁸ Publication of a number of
Delhi was banned on 9 February

New Delhi
5 February 1948

My dear Premier *

This is an addendum to my other letter

I take it that you have been pushing on the organisation of the Home Guard. Indeed continuous demands are made on us for rifles for these Home Guards. I should like to know however if you are taking any steps for training people in towns and villages for self defence work even without arms. In the United Provinces I understand that apart from the Home Guard they have started a Raksha Dal which may ultimately include several hundred thousand young men and even women. This Raksha Dal is given some training without interfering with the profession or work of the individual concerned. They are not paid any salary or allowance. I was rather impressed by the Raksha Dal I saw in Aligarh recently.

I think some such organisation should be formed on a fairly extensive scale in other provinces on behalf of the government. The question of arms does not come in. Where possible the Raksha Dal volunteers may be taught how to use a rifle. But they need not be given rifles. Indeed rifles are not available. But the arms part is the least significant. What is necessary is to discipline them and give them some training. Also to encourage them to play organised games etc. This will have a salutary effect on the public mind and more specially on the mind of those engaged in this training. There is a strong demand for such training and the success of some organisations like the R S S

*A special letter is in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

India and I trust your government will give it full cooperation in your province. I shall write to you more about this later.

Your Governor has been given an urn containing a small part of Gandhiji's ashes. He has been asked to deliver this to you. The major part of the ashes will be immersed at the junction of the Ganga and Jamna in Allahabad on the 12th February. It is suggested that some part of the ashes should be immersed on the same day if possible in the other major rivers of India. It is for this purpose that we have sent you these ashes through your Governor. I hope you will make suitable arrangements for this ceremony.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

has been largely due to their supplying this need. There is also a certain feeling of apprehension in the public mind about the possible trouble. This is not justified. But it is as well to remove this apprehension. The Raksha Dal scheme should cost very little money and should be easy to put through. The only difficulty might be to find enough instructors. I suppose many of these could be found locally or through the military authorities. Instructors need not necessarily be soldiers.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

Islamic State based on the laws of the *Shariat* and narrow provincial jealousies seem to have become so aggravated in Pakistan that he has had to issue a stern warning.⁴ How long it will take for the forces of progress in Pakistan to reach a stage when they can dominate the government it is impossible to forecast but it looks as if it will be some considerable time. But whatever happens in Pakistan quite clearly our task in India is clear we must pursue with even greater determination than in the past our efforts at forming a secular State in which men of all communities can walk with their heads high.

5 I have from time to time written to you with some pride of the political consolidation effected by the merger of states or their union into larger size units. The last day of our six months as an independent nation saw what I think will go down as a remarkable development in this direction viz the formation of Saurashtra or the Kathiawar Union. Six months ago it would have been considered an idle dream to think of an administrative merger of the hundreds of Kathiawar states let alone such a merger accompanied by full responsible government. The peninsula was ridden by factions and jealousies and it was a crazy patchwork of states of varying degrees of sovereignty with only one thing common viz autocratic rule. On the 15th of February the whole peninsula became one unit under one responsible government. This is an achievement for which Sardar Patel⁵ has deservedly won high tribute.

4 On 25 January 1948 Jinnah asked why this feeling of nervousness that the future Constitution of Pakistan is going to be in conflict with *Shariat*? Islamic principles have no parallels. Today these principles are as applicable to life as they were thirteen hundred years ago. He also asked Muslims to get rid of the disease of provincialism. A nation can never progress unless it marches in one formation.

5 Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950) Barrister and prominent Congressman from Gujarat under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi took part in Kheda satyagraha 1918 organised Bardoli peasants satyagraha 1928 President of the Congress 1931 Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home States Information and Broadcasting 1947-50.

factor in Asia and this development is not favoured. But whether these reasons are wholly responsible or not for the attitude of the great powers, clearly we must reckon with indifference and some degree of hostility on their part towards us. So far as Russia is concerned she seems to be merely watching the position at present, and no doubt she would eventually play her hand as it suits her own interest. She has shown, I am told, more understanding of our position than the other countries in the Security Council, but she is in a cleft stick because she has taken, in Greece⁷ and Korea,⁸ a line which is inconsistent with support to our case in Kashmir. On the other hand, the policy of the U S A in Greece⁹ and Korea¹⁰ does not fit in at all with the line they have so far taken up in regard to Kashmir. In any case, it is clear that the achievement of independence and a desire to maintain our own foreign relations free of attachment to blocs, has brought us sharply against the ugly forces of power politics. We must not get

7 The Greek Government in December 1946 requested the Security Council to stop Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria from aiding the guerrillas who were fighting against the democratically elected government at Athens. The Soviet Union maintained that the guerrilla activity was a result of the reactionary policy of the Athens Government against the Slav minorities rather than interference from outside powers.

8 While the Soviet Union and the United States agreed in July 1945 at Potsdam to the setting up of an independent Korea, their talks were deadlocked and the matter was referred to the United Nations. The Soviet Union insisted on the setting up of a provisional government, representation of all parties and social organisations, and the withdrawal of all foreign troops before the general elections.

9 During the Kashmir debates in the Security Council, the United States delegate disagreed with the Indian stand that outsiders (Pakistan) should be directed to withdraw their support to the raiders in Kashmir; instead he insisted that India should first agree to a plebiscite in Kashmir. In the case of the Greek civil war, the United States had been against any outside interference before the general elections could be held there.

10 The United States had insisted that the general elections in Korea should precede the withdrawal of foreign troops, but in Kashmir the American delegation insisted on withdrawal of Indian troops as a condition prior to the holding of a plebiscite.

6 My mind has been full during the last few days of Kashmir. I went to Jammu on the 15th and visited a number of military units and refugee camps. The military situation in Jammu is getting definitely better. But diplomatically we have reached almost a crisis over the Kashmir issue. Our delegation to the Security Council has just returned and I have been engaged in consultations with them. They have had to contend against exceptional difficulties in New York and I think they have done a very good piece of work, particularly Gopalaswami Ayyangar, who has shown great firmness combined with balance and dignity. All that he, Shri Setalvad and Sheikh Abdullah have told me have confirmed the impression which I conveyed to you in my last letter that the great powers have shown active partisanship. One can only speculate on the reasons for this attitude, but so far as I can gather quite a variety of factors, not one of them connected with the merits of the Kashmir issue, seem to have led to this development. The Americans who voted for the partition of Palestine and thereby alienated the sympathies of the Arabs seem anxious to win back Arab support which is essential for them in view of the oil situation and the possibility of war in the Middle East.⁶ They are therefore openly and with very little finesse supporting Pakistan. The United Kingdom, so far as the Muslim countries are concerned, seems to be in much the same position as the U.S.A. moreover she is heavily dependent on the United States for economic resources. There seems too to be a fear in the minds of the Western Powers that if Pakistan founders through internal weakness, the situation might be exploited by Soviet Russia to the serious detriment of U.S.A. and U.K. I have also heard, curiously enough, that there is some apprehension at the fact that India, which is rapidly consolidating herself politically by the integration of provinces and states, is becoming a powerful

6 The American, British and the Dutch corporations had acquired exclusive long term oil prospecting concessions in West Asia. While the United States owned 42% of its oil resources, Britain and the Netherlands accounted for 52%. The Arab League, in February 1948, threatened withdrawal of oil concessions if the United States continued to support the partition of Palestine.

20 February, 1948

enter into heavy commitments I should like to reiterate that suggestion. With the Centre's own large commitments ahead and the present state of the money market the ways and means position is becoming difficult and before launching on big schemes, in which the provinces may be counting on central assistance for grants or loans it is necessary that the Finance Ministry here should be consulted. I should also like to suggest that as far as possible the provinces should send us a consolidated statement of their requirements from the Centre each year and not individual items as at present. Without such a statement it will be impossible for the Centre to take an overall view of the situation, and plan for the best way of utilising the available resources.

10 The dollar situation is becoming extremely serious and it is becoming quite clear that India like the rest of the countries in the sterling area¹³ will have to restrict expenditure in the dollar and other hard currency areas until the situation becomes easier¹⁴. It will be necessary for the Central and provincial governments to explore sources of procurement of essential goods in the sterling area before entering upon commitments in the dollar and hard currency areas.

11 The Constituent Assembly of India has just passed legislation for the setting up of an Authority to develop the Damodar Valley¹⁵. I consider this in many ways to be the most notable

13 After Britain went off the gold standard in 1931 a group of countries including India tied their currencies to sterling and kept their exchange reserves in the form of balance with the Bank of England.

14 During the War the demand for dollars had increased because of greater dependence on imports from the United States. India's dollar expenditure was however regulated despite her surplus earnings of U.S. dollars as per the mutual agreement of the sterling area countries. This limit on dollar expenditure continued to be regulated through the Interim Sterling Balances Agreement of August 1947 which was further extended for a period of six months in February 1948.

15 A multi purpose scheme costing Rs 55 crores designed to control floods irrigate about 7 63 800 acres of land and supply power to the provinces of Bihar and West Bengal.

discouraged however. The Cabinet will carefully consider the whole Kashmir issue in the light of the present international context and in as much as any decision we may take is likely to have effects on the internal political situation I will keep you informed of our decisions as fully as possible

7 I think I ought to tell you of the situation that has developed regarding the supply of petrol and oils generally ¹¹ During the current quarter our supply has been reduced particularly in respect of diesel oil fuel oils and aviation spirit. The cuts have been so heavy that I am afraid they will interfere seriously with both transport and industrial production. We are almost wholly dependent for oil supplies on outside sources and virtually on the Anglo American Dutch combines. The whole situation is being reviewed by our Cabinet here in the next few days and our Ministries of Works Mines and Power and Transport will be communicating to you how we think the situation should be met. It may be necessary for us to introduce tighter rationing than at present and our policy regarding the leasing of mineral rights in oil may also have to undergo some modification

8 The difficulty of obtaining sufficient petrol is compelling us to think urgently of exploiting our own resources. We have not only to explore the possibilities of finding oil in the country but also to expedite the manufacture of power alcohol. A committee of scientists is examining the setting up of a plant for the extraction of liquid fuel from coal ¹²

9 You will remember that in my letter of the 15th November last I mentioned the need for the provincial governments keeping in close touch with my Finance Ministry before they

11 Shortage of oil was attributed to its increased consumption by the industrialised countries after the Second World War. For example the United States which had been the principal exporter of oil before the War was now importing it.

12 A committee was set up in February 1948 by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research to prepare plans in consultation with foreign experts for producing synthetic petrol.

New Delhi
23 February 1948

My dear Premier,*

I am writing to you about the Ex I N A personnel I have previously referred to this in my letters to you and suggested that every effort should be made to give employment to them. A number of them have obtained employment during the past year. But a considerable number still remain unemployed and are in distress. We have to tackle this question in all its aspects soon and settle it more or less finally. Meanwhile I am taking the liberty to remind you again of our responsibility in this matter and to request you to help us in discharging this responsibility.

Two major demands have been put forward on behalf of the I N A personnel. One is reinstatement in the army and the other is payment of all arrears of pay, allowances etc. that is to say treatment as prisoners of war for the entire period of their service in the I N A.

Both these demands are difficult for us to accede to. So far as reinstatement in the army is concerned we are not taking in any large numbers in the regular army at present. Apart from this many of the personnel are probably by reason of age or otherwise, not very fit for active service. But the main consideration is that taking into the army the I N A personnel as a group would probably introduce into the army a disturbing factor at a critical moment. Many of the officers and men of the Indian Army are on the whole prepared to take them back. Many of them are not so prepared for varying reasons. If they

* A special letter in addition to the Foreign Secretary.

piece of legislation that has ever been passed in this country. It is true that in the past we have had large irrigation schemes carried out by different provinces and states and inevitably a certain degree of inter governmental agreement was involved in many of them. But this is the first time we are embarking on a river project which combines in itself three great features—the magnitude of the project itself, its multi purpose character and the close cooperation, both in the constructional stage and subsequently, of the Central and two provincial governments. We have before us the model of the Tennessee Valley Scheme which has revolutionised the economy of a large countryside in the U S A and we must use all our resources to see that the Damodar Valley Scheme becomes as great a success as the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23 February 1948

and I shall inform you of their decision. Sardar Patel has meanwhile called a meeting of the I N A Enquiry and Relief Committee which will no doubt discuss this question from their point of view. We realise that we owe a certain duty to these young men many of whom are in great distress and we want to help them.

Whatever our decisions may be some forms of help should certainly be undertaken even more vigorously than in the past. The first thing is to find employment for them. As I have already told you all avenues of employment are open to them except the regular army to which I have referred above. They cannot only be taken in any civil employment but also in the Police Constabulary Home Guards and all like services. There is a considerable demand for instructors for the Home Guards. The I N A officers and V C O's² will prove good instructors. I suggest that your government might make a special effort to absorb these I N A men in some such way.

When the I N A personnel were removed or dismissed from service they were divided into various categories white grey and black and very often their character rolls had a remark against them³. These remarks and this division in various grades of demerit should not come in the way of their employment because this was done for entirely different and political reasons and has nothing to do with their character. Of course any person employed in any service must be considered suitable for it as an individual. There should be absolutely no bar against him because he was placed in the black list.

I shall be grateful if you will interest yourself in this matter and take such steps as you can.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

² The cadre of Viceroy's Commissioned Officers set up in 1942 to meet emergency demands of the field units.

³ While the Whites were permitted to remain in service the Greys were discharged and the Blacks were dismissed and/or convicted.

were taken back an argument would arise in the army about them and all manner of political currents would be let loose in the army. At any time it is undesirable to have such a development in the army. At the present delicate moment it would be even less desirable. Some of the I N A men have got entangled in narrow party politics and have associated themselves with groups like the Forward Bloc¹ etc. All this will tend to introduce a novel and confusing element within the army.

Probably most of these considerations apply only to a relatively small number of them chiefly officers and others are free from them. Nevertheless there is this difficulty and it is unsafe for us to take a step which might lead to consequences which we do not like. The army is too delicate an instrument for us to take any such risks with it. We feel therefore, that it is better not to reinstate the I N A personnel as a group in the army.

It will be remembered of course that about a third of the I N A personnel are in Pakistan and we are not responsible for them in any way.

As regards payment of arrears which are said to be due to them some rather complicated questions arise apart from the large sums involved which is in the neighbourhood of a crore and a half plus recurring expenditure in the shape of pensions. The responsibility for pay etc. for that period rests with the U K Government as they were serving abroad. But it is obvious that we cannot even suggest to the U K Government to consider their case. While they were serving in the I N A some payment was made to them by the I N A and we can hardly duplicate this payment. To treat them as prisoners of war would raise intricate and difficult questions and a great deal of controversy both national and international.

I am placing all those considerations before you so that you may know the various aspects of this question which we have to consider. The Government of India would have to decide soon.

¹ The All India Forward Bloc was formed in May 1939 by Subhas Chandra Bose and his supporters in the Congress.

3 March 1948

Kashmir and the budget In your province you have also been dealing with your budget The preparation of a budget involves consideration not only of the immediate problems but also of the wider objectives of social policy I fear that we have not arrived at the stage of having precise governmental objectives of social policy except in the vaguest terms The recent report of the Congress Economic Programme Committee gives us some kind of a social objective to aim at¹ This has been generally approved by the A I C C though further consideration of it will have to take place at the next meeting We may for the moment therefore consider this economic programme as the general direction of our policy without necessarily accepting every detail of it

4 But the more difficult question is how to shape our present policy to that end The question of timing becomes highly important A right step taken at the wrong time may lead to unfortunate consequences and even disaster We live in an extremely dynamic age with ever recurring crises It is a hand to mouth existence and we hardly have time to look far ahead Hence the difficulty to adapt immediate programmes to distant objectives

5 This difficulty is apparent in the budgets both central and provincial that have been framed They are no doubt open to criticism from many sides and will be so criticised They are in the nature of things more of a temporary expedient to meet present difficulties than a sweeping advance along any line of pre determined policy Generally speaking the objectives must necessarily be

¹ The report called for growth of the economy based on decentralisation and equitable distribution of income and wealth Its major recommendations were integrated approach to the development of the rural economy through land reforms cooperatives and village and small industries nationalisation of public utilities defence production and key industries abolition of the managing agency system and the establishment of a planning commission

New Delhi
3 March 1948

My dear Premier

During the last fortnight we have slowly recovered from the shock of Mahatma Gandhi's death. We can never wholly recover from it but inevitably life demands that we should carry on our normal activities. Throughout this past month I have been deluged with messages of sympathy and condolence on Gandhi's death. I have personally received over fifteen thousand telegrams apart from letters and a large number of these have come from foreign countries. It is astonishing how the world has reacted to Gandhi's death. Great as he was in his life his death and the manner of it suddenly made the world realise what a mighty person had left us. Many of the messages received are far from being formal ones. They are moving and eloquent tributes from the heart. We feel today even more than we ever did before the universality of Gandhi and we thus have this curious paradox of a person who was intensely national and yet completely international. No person who did not have this tremendous international appeal could have evoked the remarkable response that he did.

2 Gandhi has gone though his vivid personality still surrounds us and the burden is now upon us. We have to adjust ourselves to this burden and carry it to the best of our ability. I have no doubt that in spite of difficulties we shall succeed in overcoming the many obstacles that face us.

3 The two most important issues before us have been

8 In the Finance Bill⁵ no doubt all these proposals will be considered fully by a Select Committee. It is rather unusual to appoint a Select Committee on the Finance Bill but we have decided to do so as we wish to give the fullest consideration to these proposals. The Finance Bill gives definite relief in taxation to industry.⁶ We felt that we could not afford industry to languish and production to go down at this stage. Our primary objective is not to benefit industrialists as such but to give an incentive to the flow of investment in industrial channels and to increase production. We hoped that this would lead to stabilising the price structure of the whole country which would be of benefit to all sections of the community.

9 Our fundamental economic problem today might be said to be that of inflation⁷ and a continuing disequilibrium between purchasing power and production. This problem is a world problem and most countries are suffering from it in varying degrees including the U.S.A. Russia also suffered from it but it has tried to solve it in a spectacular way by devaluing its currency.⁸ This may achieve the objective in view but at the cost of considerable suffering to many people. I am not competent to judge of what is happening in Russia because of the very special considerations which apply to problems there and their different economy.

10 This business of inflation leads to the cost of living index rising. It has already risen far beyond the expectations of the Pay Commission and we have to face a very difficult problem now. Are we to increase dearness allowance because of this or

5 On 29 February 1948.

6 The business profits tax and the tax on companies were reduced and the super tax limit was raised on all incomes.

7 The general price index rose by 13 points in one month in February 1948.

8 The Soviet Union devalued its currency on 14 December 1947. A rouble was now worth ten old roubles and abroad 48 roubles exchanged for a pound compared to 52 in the past.

- i) to increase wealth by production
- ii) to lessen the disparity in the distribution of wealth and to promote as far as possible a tendency to economic equality

Both of these are probably admitted by all groups. The burden of taxation should therefore progressively fall on those most capable of bearing it and greater stress should be laid on direct taxation. Yet we see indirect taxation still holding its own and indeed increasing its domain. It is true that this indirect taxation is normally on luxury articles which is right.

6 The question of nationalisation of industries has also become one of immediate significance.² Generally speaking we are committed to the nationalisation of key industries. But obviously a sudden scheme of all round nationalisation might well lead to a breakdown of our economic system and to a tremendous lessening of production without immediately giving us something else in its place. The resources of the State are limited both in money and in technical personnel. I suggested therefore in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative)³ that we should concentrate on the State owning and controlling new key industries, public utilities and the like rather than acquiring old ones except where this was considered essential. This may not be very logical but it would not interfere with present production and at the same time enlarge the sphere of nationalised industry. Indeed as industrialisation proceeds the State ownership of industry will also rapidly increase.

7 In regard to the Reserve Bank and the Imperial Bank we have already decided to nationalise them after some months.⁴

2 A group of industrialists meeting at Bombay on 2 February 1948 criticised the report of the Congress Economic Programme Committee. It warned against the hasty adoption of economic doctrines wholly unrelated to the realities of the situation and urged the government to define their policy.

3 On 17 February 1948.

4 It was announced on 4 February that nationalization would take effect after 30 September 1948 when the Reserve Bank of India had ceased to be a common banker of India and Pakistan.

3 March, 1948

in Delhi and have explained to them fully our position in regard to Kashmir. Our High Commissioner in London has been in touch with Ministers of the U K Government. Mr Gordon Walker,¹³ Under Secretary for Commonwealth Relations in the U K Government, has also been here and has discussed this matter fully with us. In all these talks we have been told that our attitude is generally reasonable. On the whole it may be said that the political aspect of the situation is somewhat better than it was. But I should not like to prophesy. We have had a bad experience of what takes place in the Security Council.

12 Our Delegation for the Security Council has left for Lake Success. The Delegation is the old one except for one major change. Sheikh Abdullah is urgently needed in Kashmir and is therefore staying behind. His place has been taken up by Sir Ganga Shankar Bajpai¹⁴ who is peculiarly suited for this task. As you know he has been functioning as Secretary General in our Foreign Office here and he has done his work with great ability.

13 I propose to make soon a statement¹⁵ in the Constituent Assembly on Kashmir and we are issuing a White Paper¹⁶ containing documents and correspondence.

13 P C Gordon Walker (1907-1980) Labour member of Parliament 1945-64 and 1966-74. Parliamentary Under Secretary for Commonwealth Relations 1950-51. Foreign Secretary 1964-65.

14 (1891-1954) Joined Indian Civil Service 1914. member of Viceroy's Executive Council 1940-41. Agent General for India in Washington 1941-47. Secretary General in the Ministry of External Affairs 1947-52. Governor of Bombay from 1952 till his death.

15 In his statement on Kashmir on 5 March 1948 Nehru stated that India had only two objectives in Jammu and Kashmir state - to ensure the freedom and the progress of the people there - and to prevent anything happening that might endanger the security of India. We have nothing else to gain from Kashmir though Kashmir may profit much by our assistance.

16 The White Paper on Kashmir which included statements, messages and correspondence exchanged between the Governments of India and Pakistan till 1 January 1948 was placed on the table of the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) on 5 March 1948.

are we to allow this dearness allowance to remain where it is. It becomes a vicious race between prices and wages. The British Government have recently set their face against any general increase of wages and profits.⁹ The French Government have had a most harassing time dealing with this problem and at the moment they have obtained only a temporary respite by a series of improvisations.¹⁰ We hope that the recent increase in the cost of living in India is temporary and due to a disequilibrium caused by partial decontrol. We hope that the index figure will come down soon. We propose therefore to leave matters where they are and not to allow any increase of dearness allowance.

11 During the last fortnight we have given a great deal of time to the Kashmir issue. We have conferred with Gopalaswami Ayyangar and his colleagues on their return from Lake Success.¹¹ After all these discussions, we have not found it necessary to vary our general attitude in any major degree. We are prepared to make some minor alterations in it. During this period we have also been communicating with the U.K. Prime Minister¹² and the diplomatic representatives of other countries.

9 On 4 February 1948 the British Government tied the increase in wages with increase in production and on 24 February imposed a ceiling on profits on the sale of a number of consumer goods so as to arrest the cost of living.

10 After devaluation on 26 January 1948 the new exchange rate was fixed at 864 francs to a pound as against 480. A free exchange market in hard currencies was also set up though such multiple currency practice was against the principles of the International Monetary Fund.

11 The debate in the Security Council on Kashmir was adjourned on 11 February till 9 March 1948.

12 Nehru in a telegram to Attlee on 8 February 1948 complained that Britain and the United States were not being impartial but being guided solely by considerations of power politics in the United Nations. He urged Britain to ask Pakistan to cease hostilities in Kashmir and desired that the Security Council should immediately send out a Commission instead of debating its terms of reference. Attlee in his reply of 9 February reiterated the British stand of supporting resolutions for a fair plebiscite and on 20 February urged Nehru to have a heart to heart talk with Liaquat Ali Khan.

New Delhi
9 March, 1948

My dear Premier,*

As you are aware, the food situation in Madras is a very grave one, more specially in south east Madras and Malabar. The crisis period is likely to last from the middle of May to probably in October 1948. Both the Governor¹ and the Premier² of Madras have drawn our special attention to this impending crisis, which, if not adequately met with, may result in a tragedy of vast proportions. You will realise that both the Centre and the other provinces must do their utmost to avert this catastrophe. We cannot wait for large scale starvation before we take steps. We must, therefore, get moving immediately and do all in our power to prevent this happening. So far as the Central Government is concerned we shall do our utmost. I am sure that your government will also help in every way. Though the area specially affected is part of the Madras province, should disaster overwhelm it, the whole of India will be powerfully affected. Last minute attempts to help will fail of their purpose and will only upset our economy. We have, therefore, to move now and I solicit your full cooperation in this joint effort to help the Madras province.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 Archibald Edward Nye (1895-1967) Vice Chief of Imperial General Staff 1941-46 Governor of Madras 1946-48 British High Commissioner in India 1948-52 and in Canada 1952-55

2 O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar (1895-1970) President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee 1938 Premier Madras March 1947-April 1949

14 The food situation especially in Madras is very bad and we shall have to tighten our belts in other parts of the country in order to help Madras. Our Food Ministry is considering this matter urgently and we may have to address you on this subject separately.

15 One of our special headaches is the petrol and oil situation. We are having great difficulties in getting a sufficient quantity of this and the big oil combines are not giving us a square deal. Unfortunately we are not in a position to bring any great pressure upon them. We are doing our utmost to get the *best terms possible*. But it may be necessary for us to cut down our petrol consumption.

16 I have been deeply distressed by the recent strike in the Tata Collieries.¹⁷ The strike was illegal and without notice and has resulted in great damage to the plant. The strike is over. But *this kind of irresponsible behaviour is exceedingly harmful not only to industry but to the community as a whole and it has become essential for us to devise means to prevent this happening*.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17 Workers in the Jharia coal fields in Bihar went on strike demanding better service conditions.

New Delhi
17 March 1948

My dear Premier

The recent developments in Czechoslovakia¹ culminating in the suicide of Dr Masaryk² the Foreign Minister have naturally had grave repercussions on the international situation. Progressively the world becomes divided into sharply defined and armed camps and the expectation of war in the future increases. In Eastern Europe Czechoslovakia and to a large extent Finland³ have been brought within the Russian fold. In Western Europe the idea of a union has developed far⁴. Danger points in future appear to be Italy, Norway and France where there may be a tussle between groups favouring either of the principal power blocs.

1 The Communists took over power in Czechoslovakia on 25 February 1948.

2 (1886-1948) Son of Thomas Masaryk, the first President of Czechoslovakia. In diplomatic service since 1919, a non-party member of the coalition government from 1940 till 10 March 1948 when he was believed to have committed suicide.

3 On 24 February 1948 Finland and the Soviet Union announced their intention to sign a twenty-year treaty on the lines of mutual aid and defence treaties signed earlier between the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Rumania and Hungary. The opposition parties in Finland feared that the treaty would give virtual control of defence and external affairs to the Soviet Union. The treaty for ten years was finally signed on 6 April 1948 after some modifications. Under it Finland was to be allowed freedom in foreign affairs, military assistance in the time of war and the right to defend its own territories.

4 A treaty for fifty years of economic and social cooperation and collective military aid between Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg was signed at Brussels on 17 March 1948.

Our Food Minister, Shri Jairamdas Doulatram ³ has already visited Madras and conferred with the responsible authorities there ⁴ He is holding other conferences in Delhi and is giving constant attention to this problem He will be addressing you on this subject from time to time and pointing out ways and means of how your province can help It is his intention to call a conference of all Premiers of provinces and probably states to consider this problem ⁵ I hope to attend this conference

Surplus provinces and states will be requested to divert the maximum quantities of foodgrains possible to Madras province and to take steps to eliminate wasteful consumption in their respective areas Deficit provinces and states will be requested to reduce their demands for imports to the utmost limit Fortunately the *rabi* crop in northern India is a very promising one and this should help

In some provinces there is plenty of gram available Other food substitutes are also going to be used Every avenue of help has to be explored immediately and I earnestly invite your cooperation in this urgent task

One of our immediate difficulties is that of transport Our Transport Ministry will no doubt give every help in taking foodstuffs to Madras

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

³ (1892-1979) Congressman of Sind Governor of Bihar 1947-48 Minister of Food and Agriculture 1948-50 Governor of Assam 1950-56

⁴ On 15 February 1948

⁵ Held on 28 April 1948

There are still major obstacles in the way of an agreement or a decision which we could easily accept. We are being pressed again in private conferences to push out Sheikh Abdullah for some time at least from the Kashmir administration. This is one of the points on which we cannot give in. To do so would be to desert the national movement of Kashmir and to encourage all the reactionary elements. We therefore propose to adhere to our position in this matter. As a matter of fact, as you are aware, the Maharaja of Kashmir has issued a proclamation forming a new interim government with Sheikh Abdullah as Prime Minister⁷ and this step of his has been acclaimed by large numbers of people in the state.

5 Nothing much has happened in the Kashmir state during the last fortnight except abundant rain which has practically stopped all means of communication within the state as well as to the state. All military operations had to be toned down because of this rain and snow and even Sheikh Abdullah was unable to return to Kashmir as there was no way of getting there either by air or by land.

6 Recent reports from Kashmir have given us a fairly vivid account of the way our soldiers and airmen are functioning there under extremely difficult conditions of cold and snow and slush. The reports speak very highly of the way our men have faced this inclement weather to which they were not at all accustomed, as well as the attacks of the enemy. The rain has now stopped and a change in weather is coming in. This will no doubt lead to a quickening of military operations on either side. We have received reports of the enemy sending reinforcements on all the fronts and preparing for some kind of an offensive. We are fully prepared for it.

7 The proclamation issued on 5 March 1948 also provided for an elected national assembly to frame a new constitution for the state.

2 This tense situation finds its repercussions in every phase of international activity whether it is Korea the Middle East or elsewhere. The Middle East is supposed to be a possible theatre of war in the future and hence a great deal of manoeuvring for position is going on there. The Palestine problem grows more and more insoluble and is now before the Security Council.⁵ Indeed it has rather pushed out the Kashmir issue from the Security Council for the time being.

3 I am mentioning this international background because it is bound to produce reactions in India and in case of graver developments our own policies will have to be carefully considered. Even our domestic policies may be seriously affected. We have therefore to be on the alert and not to be taken unawares by the developments. I do not personally think that there is going to be a war on a big scale in the near future chiefly because of the fear of war and yet everything points towards conflict and people in Europe and America are being worked up to a frame of mind which looks upon war as inevitable.

4 As I have said above the Kashmir issue has been postponed in the Security Council. There is Palestine and there is the Czechoslovakian matter which the Security Council will consider. We do not know when the Kashmir issue may be taken up again. This is very disconcerting as some of our colleagues who are badly wanted here are held up in America. On the whole the position in the Security Council appears to be a little better on this occasion from India's point of view but no great importance need be attached to these varying phases.⁶

5 The Security Council was concerned that Britain's determination to end her mandate on 14 May 1948 as reported by the United Nations Commission might result in widespread strife and chaos.

6 The representative of Kuomintang China who was also the President of the Security Council in March in keeping with an assurance given to the Indian delegation on 10 March introduced a resolution on 18 March calling upon Pakistan to withdraw her nationals and tribesmen from Kashmir and asking India to guarantee a free and fair plebiscite after setting up an interim government representative of all political groups.

Standstill Agreement was honoured fully and there was no trouble internally or on the borders

9 I have addressed you separately about the Madras food situation and asked for the full cooperation of your government in dealing with it. I am glad to say that many of the provinces have offered this cooperation. The Food Minister spoke in the Assembly on the subject today and he gave a slightly more optimistic account than he had done previously.¹¹ That however should not lead to any relaxation on our part or complacency. The situation is undoubtedly a very difficult one and requires every effort of the Centre and the provinces to meet it. I do not think it is desirable for any of us to talk too much in public about approaching starvation and famine for large numbers of people. This produces depression all round and does not help. But the fact remains that we have to be as wide awake as possible. We shall take every single step to avoid any catastrophe.

10 The problem of food brings us to consider the multi purpose development schemes affecting more than one province. From the point of view of the general development of the country and more especially food production any such schemes are worth consideration. At the present moment they are more specially urgent and important. Because they affect more than one province the cooperation of several provinces becomes necessary they cannot be viewed from the point of view of one province alone.¹² Sometimes there has been a tendency for one province to think of its own interests and to ignore the interests of other provinces. I need hardly point out

11 The Centre apart from rushing in extra allotment of foodgrains to Madras also assured Parliament on 16 March that reserve stocks would be maintained to meet any emergency requirements.

12 There were reports of disputes over the Tungabhadra project between Madras, Mysore and Hyderabad; the Lokshana-tirtha project between Coorg and Mysore; the Sabarmati project between Bombay and Baroda; and the Chambal development scheme among the Rajputana states.

7 I might mention that the 'Azad Kashmir' Government,⁸ of which much is heard exists largely on paper. From eye witness accounts we learn that there is no functioning of this government no proper officer or officers and it is more or less of a facade put up for external consumption.

8 No settlement has yet been arrived at with Hyderabad and the Standstill Agreement has been chiefly honoured in its breach. There have been discussions in Delhi but they have yielded no result.⁹ Probably there may be further discussions after a while but meanwhile the situation there deteriorates both internally and on the Andhra border. The President of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen has recently delivered some speeches which are amazingly rabid.¹⁰ The Nizam's Government either is powerless to deal with the Ittehad or generally supports them. The chief difficulty of the Hyderabad situation is that we have to deal with people who are completely unreasonable and unrealistic. From any long distance point of view there is no need for any of us to take a dismal view of the situation in Hyderabad but undoubtedly there are possible dangers for which we should be prepared. It has been and is our desire to arrive at some kind of a friendly settlement because any other course would lead to trouble and unhappiness on a large scale. We are not anxious to force an accession or even to expedite it. We are prepared to wait but the people should decide about it. Nor can we accept the position that Hyderabad can continue as an autocratic feudal state while the rest of India becomes democratic. For the present we would be content if the

8 Set up at Rawalpindi on 3 October 1947 by members of the Muslim Conference.

9 During discussions with the Hyderabad delegation the Government of India insisted that popular government should be introduced in the state and the Ittehad declared unlawful.

10 On 5 March 1948 Syed Kasim Razvi asserted that Hyderabad would never accede to India and if India decided to take military action her troops would have to march on the dead bodies of the Muslims in the Hyderabad state.

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17 March, 1948

prospect every source of oil in the country A scheme for the production of synthetic petrol from low grade coal is also under active consideration This process is a well recognised one now and the only difficulty is that it is very costly

14 There has been a boundary dispute between us and Pakistan on the Assam East Bengal Border This relates to the Patharia Hill reserve forest as well as to another place on the Assam border The area concerned is a small one but it is important as there is possibility of oil there In agreement with Pakistan, both Dominions have withdrawn armed forces from the area and a joint commission has been appointed to consider and report on this matter ¹⁴

15 The recovery of abducted women has not been proceeding as satisfactorily as we had hoped and there has been much controversy with Pakistan about the procedure to be adopted Our Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation¹⁵ went to Lahore yesterday and had a prolonged conference there This conference resulted in some agreements on various matters such as property etc, but it did not lead to any satisfactory arrangement about the recovery of abducted women The matter is being pursued ¹⁶ On the whole we have been successful in recovering a fairly considerable number of Muslim women from East Punjab and the Punjab states but the recovery of non Muslim women from Pakistan has been slow Many of them have been spread out in the Frontier Province and even beyond or are in Gujrat area where we are not allowed to have a liaison officer probably because of the Kashmir operations

14 This was decided on 15 March 1948

15 K C Neogy (1888 1977) Member of Central Assembly 1921 34 and 1942 47 Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation 1947 48 and Commerce 1948 50

16 The conference called for reciprocity of measures to deal with offenders in cases of abduction and for restoration of abducted women and the exchange of prisoners

to you that this approach is a disastrous one and injurious even to the particular province which may adopt it. All planned development necessitates taking the larger view and full cooperation between various units.

11 The Standstill Agreement between India and Pakistan with regard to trade and commerce lapsed on the 29th February and from the 1st March Pakistan has been declared foreign territory for the purpose of customs or excise tariff. We have however issued instructions that various types of perishable goods should not be subjected to any customs or other tariff. Our declaration of Pakistan as foreign territory for this purpose has been severely criticised in Pakistan and described as an act of hostility and an attempt by India to sabotage the existence of Pakistan. This of course, is not true and it is our earnest desire to have a long term agreement with Pakistan relating to all matters of common concern. Our past attempts to arrive at a certain agreement received a very cold response from that country. There is a possibility of all these matters being considered afresh as between two Dominions.

12 Since I wrote to you last the petrol and fuel oil situation has shown some improvement. The cut on our fuel oil supplies has been restored and it is expected that petrol supplies will be better. To some extent we are indebted to a delegation of the Defence Ministry that visited the United Kingdom recently for this change for the better.¹⁵

13 The position under which we are dependent for the bulk of our petrol on foreign countries is extremely unsatisfactory. We have therefore decided to explore all other possible sources. The production of power alcohol must of course be pushed wherever possible in the provinces. We are also going to

¹⁵ The Indian defence delegation to London in February-March 1948 included the Commander in Chief F R R. Boucher, the Defence Secretary Lt M. Patel and the Defence Financial Adviser A K Chanda.

19 May I venture to remind you that in the context of the national and international situation today, we must discourage in every way every disruptive tendency in the country. Sometimes even good causes cannot be encouraged because they may tend towards encouraging disruption. We have to hold together to face our perils and difficulties and we cannot afford to be too provincial just as we cannot afford to be communal. The question of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic or other basis has been before us for a long time and we have accepted the main principles that should govern this.¹⁹ It is proposed that the Constituent Assembly should appoint a committee to look at the broad aspects of this question before another committee or commission considers the details. Meanwhile it will not expedite matters to try to rush through things or to agitate the public mind continually on this matter.²⁰ I can very well appreciate the desire in some parts of the country for a separate provincial existence. Nobody challenges that but sometimes we have to take first things first and any reversal of that order may even delay the thing we press most. Therefore this question of new provinces should be viewed in the perspective of the all India and world situation today. We cannot afford to lose ourselves in heated debates and unending arguments. We have to concentrate all our energy to meet immediate crises.

20 I trust that you will not slacken your attempts to root out communalism in all its aspects. Owing to the strength of public opinion against communalism many of these communal bodies decided to lie low but they are still there and we cannot afford to forget about them. We have suffered enough from their activities and we can take no further risks.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

19 The Indian National Congress had agreed to it on principle at its Nagpur session in 1920.

20 There was at this time an agitation for the creation of the provinces of Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra.

16 A large number of refugees from Mirpur and other parts of Kashmir many of them being women have been kept for months in various camps on either side of the Kashmir Pakistan border notably at Ali Bag and Muzaffarabad These people have suffered greatly many have died from exposure and cold The women specially have had a very bad time Agreements have been arrived at for their removal to Lahore and subsequently to India but thus far no special step has been taken to give effect to this agreement perhaps because of the tremendous rains which prevented movement

17 You may have read in the papers of my recent visit to Vizagapatnam where I launched a new India made ship of 8 000 tons built by the Scindia Company¹⁷ This was a historic occasion and I am sure that the ship building industry in India will develop rapidly and Vizagapatnam will be a principal centre of it This town has also got one of the principal bases of the Indian Navy and I met the officers and ratings I was sorry to learn that a sufficient response is not coming from the public for the Navy I think it is an excellent career for our bright young men

18 The general economic situation is a very disturbing one and prices continue to keep up The Central Government is giving the most earnest thought to this matter You will have noticed that just before and after the central budget was presented stock exchanges and markets behaved in a very curious way One is inclined to think that this behaviour was deliberately organised in order to influence the policies of government¹⁸ If this presumption is justified, then we have to take care not to be influenced by such tactics indulged in by particular groups

17 *Jal Usha* was launched on 14 March 1948

18 Shares in the market slumped very low and business circles criticized the government for not giving the expected relief to industry and for supporting the Congress economic programme

Party in India and generally our relations with Asian countries. We have to proceed cautiously in all such matters bearing in mind what the consequences of a particular step might be on other issues.

3 To give a minor example certain steps taken by us in our domestic sphere relating to some Afghans² and tribal Pathans who have been functioning as money lenders have given rise to difficulties both with Afghanistan and the Frontier Province Pathans.³ Afghanistan has been very friendly to us and we desire to retain that friendship. In the Frontier Province we have no desire to do anything which might irritate Pathans as a whole many of whom have friendly feelings towards India. As a matter of fact there is no major problem of Afghans or Pathans in India at present. The normal summer migrations of *Pawmdas* have ceased because of the partition and the large number of nomadic money lenders who came have stopped coming. Therefore we should proceed cautiously in dealing with Afghans or tribal people in India. So far as citizens of Pakistan are concerned we have an understanding that they would be treated as before in regard to ingress or egress. The Government of India have issued a communique on this subject to which I should like to draw your attention. I would suggest that no sudden steps be taken to expel any person of this type. We must consider this carefully and give sufficient time.

4 Again in regard to deportation of any foreigner from India this involves our relations with the foreign country concerned and no steps should be taken without reference to the External Affairs Department.

2 In February 1948 all Afghan nationals without valid passports were declared foreigners and asked to leave by 31 March. It was later clarified that this had become necessary because India after independence did not have a common frontier with Afghanistan. But these orders were after consultation with the Afghan embassy kept in abeyance pending further examination.

3 Following the protest in the N.W.F.P. Assembly in Pakistan the Government clarified on 30 March that no Pathans from the Frontier Province had been asked to leave.

New Delhi
1 April 1948

My dear Premier

The international situation continues to be tense and the next two months are supposed to be critical. I still hope that the crisis will somehow be got over at least in the sense that there is no war but I fear that even otherwise the crisis will continue for it is a deep seated one and the antagonisms are very great. I am convinced that India's role should be as far as possible to continue to remain apart from any particular bloc. This is safest for India and it may in the future give some chance to India to play a pacific role. We cannot place this too high for we are not strong enough at present to exercise much influence. Nevertheless it would be equally wrong to ignore the fact that we can and do count in international affairs. It would be a very short sighted policy for us to line up with any group in order to gain some temporary advantage. We are trying to remain as friendly as possible to other countries and in present circumstances our contacts and economic relations are of course far greater with England and America than with other countries. This is likely to continue.

2 The international situation affects to some extent many of our own interests like the Kashmir issue. French possessions in India¹ the policy to be pursued in regard to the Communist

1 French possessions at the time of India's independence included settlements in Pondicherry and Karikal on the Madras coast. Malé on the Malabar coast. Yanam on the coast of Andhra and Chandernagore in West Bengal. The French Government decided in August 1949 to hold a referendum in these settlements to enable the people to decide if they desired a merger with India.

otherwise the general military situation is favourable. The return of Sheikh Abdullah to Srinagar after a long interval has been hailed with great enthusiasm by the populace.

8 The French Government is creating a lot of difficulties about the future of French possessions in India. Recently there was a petty upheaval in Chandernagore and it is clear that conditions in these settlements are far from static.⁸ We do not want to fall out with France over this issue but we have made it clear that a decision should be made in the near future according to the wishes of the people concerned.

9 The resignation of members of the Socialist Party from the Congress is a major event in our domestic politics.⁹ However most of us might view this there is general regret that many old Congressmen should have found it necessary to leave the old moorings. From every other point of view it is desirable that nothing should be said or done to add to the rift that has been created. The times are too critical for us to add to our differences and our difficulties.

10 The recent communal outbreak in Godhra¹⁰ is a warning to us of the forces still functioning in India. From the accounts we have received this outbreak was caused by the refugees mostly from Sind. Very exaggerated accounts of the casualties have been published. As a matter of fact the casualties were not great, probably less than 50 altogether but there was large scale arson and the fires spread practically destroying the town.

8 On 27 March Nehru restrained the West Bengal Government from taking action against the Communists in Chandernagore who were suspected by the French Consul General of planning to take over the administration by force and announce accession to India.

9 The Congress Socialist Party which since its formation in 1934 had functioned as a group within the Congress at its convention at Nasik on 20 March 1948 declared itself as an independent party and directed its members to resign from the primary membership and the elective posts in the Congress Party by 15 April.

10 The clashes occurred in Godhra near Bombay on 25 March.

5 The recent development in Kalat state is evidence of how a wrong or careless word can have serious consequences ⁴

6 In the Security Council there is a complete deadlock over Kashmir⁵ and from today onwards the new chairman Dr Lopez of Colombia ⁶ will function. The Security Council has lost a great deal of its prestige owing to recent developments in regard to Palestine ⁷. It hardly seems likely that it can arrive at any satisfactory solution of the Kashmir problem. The instructions to our delegates are that while they should make every effort to arrive at a settlement they cannot give in on any major issue. It is possible that if matters prolonged themselves much more part of our delegation might return to India.

7 Military operations in Kashmir state have been proceeding though at a somewhat slow pace. There may be further developments soon specially in the southern area. The position of Poonch city is not satisfactory. Although there is no military danger it has become a little difficult for our aircraft to go there because the enemy have obtained some howitzers presumably from Pakistan and these guns shell the city and the airfield. Skardu in Baltistan is a remote area very difficult of access at this time of the year. Some of the state troops there have been cut off and the position there is very unsatisfactory.

4 In a sharp reaction to All India Radio's announcement of the plans of the ruler of Kalat state to accede to India Mir Ahmad Yar Khan declared on 28 March 1948 the accession of his state to Pakistan and stated that despite his differences with Jinnah he as a Muslim ruler could never allow his state's accession to India.

5 The Chinese delegate's draft resolution in the Security Council acceptable to India was rejected by Pakistan. See *ante* p 86.

6 Alfonso Lopez (1886-1959) President of Colombia 1934-38 and 1942-45. President U.N. Security Council April 1948. member U.N. Commission for India and Pakistan 1949.

7 On 30 March 1948 the Security Council having failed to decide on the United States' draft recommending temporary trusteeship for Palestine and suspension of the partition plan called for a truce between the Jews and Arabs and convened a special session of the U.N. General Assembly.

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10 The clashes occurred in Godhra near Bombay on 25 March.

of Godhra including both Hindu and Muslim houses. This has resulted in large scale migration of the population of Godhra and round about. It will be realised that such an occurrence can be and is being utilised very much against us in the world outside and more especially in the United Nations.

11 I should like to draw your special attention to two statements made by me recently before the Assembly. One of these related to the ex I N A personnel.¹¹ Except for reinstatement in the army we have thrown open every avenue of service to them. We are giving them pensions that were due and in addition a sum of Rs. 30 lakhs has been set apart to help them. We have undertaken to find employment for them and provincial governments are specially requested to help in this. They can be employed in the Home Guards, Armed Constabulary, police and all branches of the civil services.

12 The other statement referred to the threatened strike of the Central Government employees in Calcutta.¹² That statement is a long one and I need not add to it.¹³ We have no desire whatever to come in the way of legitimate industrial activity including strikes, but it seems clear to us that the Calcutta strike was something much more than this. We have evidence of deliberate trouble being created in the security services also and there is a fear of sabotage. Many people talk about violent methods. This kind of thing can obviously not be tolerated. We made it clear therefore that any government employee joining in the strike in Calcutta will be liable to be dismissed.

11 On 29 March 1948.

12 The call for a strike was given by the Federation of the Central Government Employees Union to protest against the decision of the Government to retrench staff recruited in temporary departments set up during the Second World War and to demand better service conditions.

13 Nehru stated on 30 March that the strike had a political objective and the Government would not give in to blackmail.

13 In this Calcutta strike as well as in other parts of the country the Communist Party has played a leading role and many of their members have openly declared that they are out to fight the government in every way¹⁴ The West Bengal Government as you know has banned the Communist Party¹⁵ This was done without any reference to us Normally this procedure is undesirable because any such action leads to repercussions and is therefore to be considered in its larger context The Government of India later suggested to provincial governments that any member of the Communist Party suspected of organising trouble more specially in the security services might be arrested and detained There was no intention of banning the Communist Party or indeed of large scale arrests I hope your government would bear this in mind and only detain such persons against whom you have some proof that they are indulging in dangerous activities¹⁶

14 It is not enough for us to take up a negative attitude in regard to industrial matters In the course of a week or so Government will publish their statement on industrial policy¹⁷ We hope to set up a Central Planning Commission also soon

14 At the party's meeting in Calcutta on 28 February B T Ranadive replaced as Secretary P C Joshi who had been charged with supporting the Nehru Government The party led by Ranadive gave a call to workers and peasants to seize power as achievement at one stroke of people's democracy has become an immediate attainable objective New cadres of workers and peasants were raised in Telangana Kerala parts of West Bengal Bihar eastern U P Maharashtra Tripura Manipur and East Punjab

15 On 25 March 1948

16 A number of Communists were arrested at several places for indulging in unlawful activities

17 The resolution on industrial policy of 7 April 1948 stated that a mere redistribution of existing wealth without increase in national wealth would mean the distribution of poverty It demarcated the spheres of the public and the private sectors and elaborated policy in regard to nationalization of key industries development of cottage and small scale industries industrial labour social justice and attitude to foreign capital

Such a Commission can only work with the full cooperation of the provincial governments and I trust that it will have their cooperation. Recently there have been indications of the growth of a narrow provincial outlook in some of the provinces. We have viewed this development with apprehension. If communalism was bad as it undoubtedly was and is provincialism is almost equally bad. This will come in the way of any all India planning or development. If restrictions in regard to employment or other matters are imposed industry will not grow and no one will hold himself responsible for it. I earnestly trust that your government will discourage this tendency towards provincialism.

15 The food situation in Madras is somewhat better and the Minister for Food gave a rather optimistic view of the situation recently. While this is undoubtedly pleasing there is great danger of complacency. The situation continues to be very serious and demands the utmost effort on the part of the Central and provincial governments.

16 The exodus of non Muslims from East Bengal continues. We are naturally as much bound to help these refugees as any from Western Pakistan. Nevertheless it must be remembered that it is dangerous to encourage this exodus as this may lead to disastrous consequences. An Inter Dominion Conference is going to be held in the middle of April in Calcutta to discuss various outstanding matters between East and West Bengal.¹⁸ The Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation will lead the delegation on behalf of India. It is hoped that this conference may result in toning down the customs difficulties at the frontiers of India and Pakistan.

17 May I draw your attention to a tendency in some provinces to use very difficult Hindi words in our political and administrative work? If this continues it will raise barriers

¹⁸ Held from 15 to 17 April 1948

between one part of India and another. There is no reason whatever why we should give up using well known words even though they might be English and coin new and unknown words. Words get their inner content of meaning from use and a mere artificial coining is not enough. In parts of northern India there have been many complaints about the use of difficult Hindi and Sanskritised words. Indeed our propaganda has suffered because of this. Recently we had a complaint from a large number of refugees in Kurukshetra camp who said that they were unable to follow fully A I R broadcasts. These broadcasts are by no means difficult although there is a larger mixture of purely Hindi words in them. The result has been that a considerable number of persons have taken to hearing the Pakistan radio which has specialised in giving exaggerated and false news. I am particularly anxious that in some of our provincial assemblies this process of using very difficult Hindi words should not go far. This will cut us off from the masses also to some extent.

18 I propose to pay a brief visit to Orissa on the 12th and 13th of this month to inaugurate the Hirakud Dam which is part of the Mahanadi Scheme. I think that our river valley projects are perhaps the most important work we have in front of us and the sooner we get going with them the more we will advance on other fronts. I hope that each province will pay particular attention to the river valley projects within its area.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
4 April, 1948

My dear Premier *

In response to a request made by the Ministry of Commonwealth Relations, your government was good enough to reserve some seats in your medical and engineering colleges for Indian students coming from South and East Africa. This concession has, however, been accompanied by the levy of fairly large sums by way of capitation or enhanced tuition fees from these students.¹ It is true that these are the normal fees charged from all extra provincial students and are not a peculiar disability on Indian students coming from the African countries only. It seems to me, however, that these students who come to India from far off countries, principally for cultural and sentimental reasons, do deserve special treatment. Facilities of higher education are denied to them in the countries of their adoption and they, therefore, naturally and legitimately look to the mother country for assistance.² The Ministry of Commonwealth Relations is sending an official letter to your government requesting the waiver of these fees in the case of students coming from South and East Africa, and I trust that the request will receive the sympathetic consideration that it deserves.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 Medical and engineering colleges in the provinces of Bombay, U P, Madras and Bihar charged capitation fees. The Madras Medical College charged tuition fees at double the normal rate.

2 Due to racial discrimination, the Indians in South Africa did not get enough facilities for higher education. In East Africa, institutions for imparting such education did not even exist.

New Delhi
15 April 1948

My dear Premier

I have just come back after a brief two day visit to Orissa. I went there to inaugurate the construction of the Hirakud Dam¹ and to lay the foundation stone of the new capital of Orissa at Bhubaneswar². The two days were full of work and engagements but I had a sense of peace there which I had not experienced for a considerable time. The atmosphere of Orissa was very different from the turgid conflict laden air of Delhi and of so many other places in India today. The problems before the provincial government were those of construction and the many difficulties that beset other provinces were singularly absent. There were no internees or political prisoners in the jails. People there were naturally interested in events that were taking place in the rest of India and the world. But that interest was a somewhat distant one—something in which they were not themselves intimately involved. I felt how good it would be if the rest of India would also think more in terms of constructive and creative effort rather than of conflict.

2 The Hirakud Dam is part of the great Mahanadi Scheme of river valley development. The entire scheme is a mighty one and when it is fully realised it ought to change the whole face of the province. The disastrous floods that have periodically overwhelmed Orissa will be a thing of the past. Large fresh areas will be brought under cultivation. The erosion of the soil will be stopped and more than two million kilowatts of electric

1 On 12 April 1948

2 On 13 April 1948

New Delhi
4 April, 1948

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15 April 1948

and playgrounds have been specially laid out with this object in view. The new town will be grouped in self contained neighbourhood units each comprising about 850 families. This will enable the town to grow without losing its community and neighbourly character. In each area residential houses will surround the schools and shopping centres and will be near to open fields and recreation grounds. In the centre of the town will be a group of public buildings with a Gandhi Memorial Pillar symbolising the life and teachings of Gandhi. The new city is fortunate in having an architect of vision and engineers of both vision and capacity and its growth will be watched with great interest.

4 To come back to the less pleasant topics there is Kashmir and there is Hyderabad. There is the question of our tense relations with Pakistan and there is the strike of Central Government employees which took place in Calcutta.

5 In Kashmir our forces have occupied Rajauri.⁵ This has been a welcome success and it has liberated a large number of civilians who had been undergoing great suffering there. We have had no details of these operations yet but first accounts indicate that before the raiders left Rajauri they destroyed and looted the town and killed a large number of these innocent people. Meanwhile the Security Council continues its leisurely and more or less passive course. Possibly in a day or two it may meet to consider the Kashmir matter again but it is exceedingly doubtful if this will lead to any substantial results. On the 16th of this month the Palestine issue will be considered by the Security Council and then Kashmir will be forgotten for another period. Our delegation will probably return soon for we cannot afford to keep a big delegation consisting of one of our Ministers and other important members indefinitely in New York. We shall leave one or two representatives there in case they are required.

power will be available for industry or other purposes. It is proposed also to have a deep water canal to the sea for inland navigation. All this is a fascinating vision of the future which fills one with enthusiasm. As I threw in some concrete which was to form the base of the great Hirakud Dam, a sense of adventure seized me and I forgot for a while the many troubles that beset us. I felt that these troubles will pass, but that the great dam and all that follow from it will endure for ages to come. This is the first of our great schemes on which work has actually started. I hope that the Damodar Valley Scheme will also be inaugurated soon and the many others about which we have been thinking so long. Unfortunately most of these schemes and projects have taken many long years in process of incubation, sometimes as long as 30 or 40 years. The Mahanadi project is an exception as it was thought of first only three or four years ago and a great deal of work has been put in since then.

3 The laying of the foundation stone of the capital city of Bhubaneswar turned out to be more exciting than I had thought. The site is an ideal one: undulating ground and a cool breeze coming from the sea. The past is represented by ancient temples, some of them famous for their architecture and artistry.³ Otherwise there is a clean slate to write upon. The architect⁴ and the chief engineer have thought of this future city in terms not of a few palatial buildings but of a happy community. The capital is planned to help the people who have to live and work and play there. It will be, I hope, a pleasant city with attractive buildings. First attention has been paid to the health, safety and education of the children and their schools.

3 The ancient city was the capital of the Kalinga dynasty. Founded in the 5th century, it developed around a sacred lake, Bindusagar, in the 8th century.

4 Otto H. Koenigsberger (b. 1908), German town planner, Chief Architect, Mysore State, 1939-48; Director of Housing, Government of India, 1948-51. Planned the townships of Mysore, Jamshedpur, Mithapur, Bhubaneswar and Gandhi Nagar (Ahmedabad) in India.

6 Hyderabad had become an even more vital issue than it has been chiefly because of the activities of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen and their volunteer corps the Razakars who have spread terror in the towns and rural areas of the state. The President of the Ittehad has been delivering amazingly irresponsible speeches and the situation is deteriorating greatly.⁶ It has been the Government of India's policy to seek a peaceful settlement even though there might be some delay in this but it is becoming increasingly difficult to remain passive while all these developments are taking place inside and on the borders of Hyderabad state. As I write this the Prime Minister of Hyderabad⁷ has again come to Delhi and I do not know what the outcome of our talks will be. Our position has been and is that the people of Hyderabad cannot continue to live under an authoritarian and feudal regime which is becoming increasingly violent and oppressive and which threatens the lives and property of the great majority of the population. All over India every state has introduced responsible government in a large measure. Some states have merged into the provinces some have grouped themselves together to form major units of the Indian Union like the provinces.⁸ Some of the big states continue as units but with responsible government. The only exception is Hyderabad where there is no change whatever. I might also mention that the states in the North West which have acceded to Pakistan also remain unchanged in their internal administration.⁹

7 It is manifest that Hyderabad cannot remain as it is a

6 On 31 March 1948 Kasim Razvi declared that Hyderabad was an Islamic state and Razakars were fully armed to defend their freedom and fight the "Hindu Kafirs". On 10 April he said that Hyderabad would recover the ceded districts and the "day is not far off when the waves of the Bay of Bengal will be washing the feet of our sovereign".

7 Mir Laik Ali Businessman who joined politics and became Prime Minister of Hyderabad 1947-48.

8 The state of Vindhya Pradesh was inaugurated on 5 April 1948 and the Union of Rajasthan was inaugurated by Nehru on 18 April.

9 The states of Chitral Dir Swat Amb and Phulera.

have to help those who come. The problem of Hyderabad as other similar problems must be viewed in this context. For if major trouble breaks out, it would add to these vast migrations and worsen, the communal atmosphere all over the country.

11 On the 7th April, Government announced their industrial policy¹³. It is hoped to appoint a Planning Commission before long which will consider all aspects of development. For the present, only the industrial aspect has been announced. You will no doubt have read the statement of policy in regard to nationalisation, the development of cottage and small scale industries, and the machinery for settlement of labour disputes in cooperation with the parties concerned.

12 The strike of Central Government employees in Calcutta has ended. We have decided that there should be no victimisation and only those who have functioned as ringleaders and more specially those who have been guilty of violence will not be taken back and serious cases might be proceeded against.

13 As you know a number of members of the Communist Party have been recently arrested in various provinces. The Communist Party as such has not been banned except by the West Bengal Government and there is no intention of banning it or interfering with its legitimate activities. But some of the activities in the recent past have been far from legitimate and have created grave disorder. There has been open incitement for the collection of arms and violence and sabotage has been

¹³ The industrial policy resolution was considered by some Congressmen a far cry from the recommendation of the Congress economic programme. In particular the resolution was criticized for postponing the Government's decision on nationalisation by ten years and accepting the concept of mixed economy under the pressure of business groups. Some members also criticized the announcement of this resolution without reference to the Party.

some considerable advance will be made which can be followed later by an Inter Dominion Conference in Delhi ¹²

9 We are having to face a new problem or rather a new aspect of an old problem. A stream of Hindu refugees continues to come into India from Sind and East Bengal. In addition to this we have now got to face the return of considerable numbers of Muslim who had gone over to Pakistan but who wish now to return to India. This is a welcome indication that conditions in India have improved and are better than those prevailing in Pakistan. We have encouraged people to return. But if all this traffic is one way only obviously this leads to grave difficulties and comes in the way of rehabilitation. Most of our towns are full of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan. In Delhi there are over half a million of such refugees. If large numbers of Muslims come back it is very difficult to find accommodation for them unless some non Muslims go back to Pakistan. We have tried our utmost to adhere to the policy enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi and have put no difficulty in the way of Muslims returning to India. But the problem of finding lands or houses remains and is likely to become much more acute as the summer advances. There is even a danger of epidemics. In some cities of Rajputana which are overcrowded with refugees there is a lack of water apart from other lacks. Our general policy now is not to prevent people from coming back if they wish to do so but to point out the difficulties they will have to face in regard to accommodation and business or occupation.

10 We are very anxious that Hindus should not leave East Bengal. If they do so in very large numbers they will suffer greatly and we might be wholly unable to make any arrangements for them. At the same time conditions in East Bengal have deteriorated and over a million Hindus have come over during the past few months. The stream continues and we

¹² Held from 3 to 6 May 1949

feared. What has recently happened in Burma is a pointer to what might happen here.¹⁴ It was with the greatest regret that action of this kind of arresting and interning people was taken by government. As you will realise, this goes against the grain and we want to limit it as far as possible. In spite of all efforts mistakes are made by local officials and one glaring case of such a mistake was in one province where a leading member of the Communist Party who had long been ill and who was actually under a high temperature was arrested. He died a few days later in prison.¹⁵ It was of course totally unnecessary and undesirable to arrest a man who was very ill and government's case is necessarily weakened when such instances occur through thoughtlessness. We have to be very careful in having recourse to repressive measures because the appetite grows with use and it appears a simple way out of a difficulty. But as believers of civil liberty know, the consequences are apt to be bad and a popular government like ours has to be particularly careful.

14 The Socialists have formally left the Congress. This had become inevitable and yet it is painful to part with old friends and colleagues. Thus far in the long and chequered history of the Congress, those who had dropped out from time to time had been the more conservative elements. This is the first occasion when any major withdrawal of progressive elements has taken place. This is not a pleasant reflection and the thought occurs whether we still hold by our old moorings or are drifting away from them. So long as Gandhiji was with us, he stood as a great sentinel warning us of any straying from the path and trying to make us adhere to the standards and values he had set. Now that he is gone we have no such sentinel and the burden falls upon us.

14 Martial law was imposed in Central Burma on 9 April 1948 to check communist raids on police stations. The Communists had formed the People's Freedom Army and were active in the districts of Pegu, Myingyan, Bassein and the delta region.

15 Rudra Dutt Bhardwaj died on 8 April within four days of detention at Dehra Dun.

Actual elections under the new Constitution cannot be held for another year or so. But there may be some transitory provisions for this intervening period.²²

20 I have not written to you anything about the international situation. You will no doubt be following this with anxious interest as it grows more and more threatening. Each one of us may, according to his bent, apportion blame to this or that country or individual. But the fact remains that whoever might be to blame, subsequent disaster will overwhelm the guilty and the innocent alike. So far as India is concerned, we shall continue to adhere to our declared policy to keep out of power entanglements. There is no other alternative policy for us.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

²² The new Constitution of India adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949, was inaugurated on 26 January 1950 when India was declared a Republic. Provision was made in the Constitution Act to endow old bodies and functionaries with powers of continuance till their replacement by the new bodies consequent on the inauguration of the new Constitution. Accordingly, till the elections were held in March 1952, the Constituent Assembly of India acted as the Provisional Parliament, and the provincial legislatures exercised all powers conferred upon them by the new Constitution. In the absence of the Council of States and the office of Vice-President, the office of President in case of vacancy was to be filled temporarily by the Chief Justice of India.

Sardar Patel is now much better, but he will have to take rest for another month or two ¹⁸

18 The Emperor of Abyssinia¹⁹ has asked us to send a small delegation to his country to explore possibilities of greater participation by India in the industries trade and agriculture of that country We propose to send such a delegation before long

19 The All India Congress Committee is meeting in Bombay on the 24th and 25th of this month Some of its decisions may well be vital from the point of view of Government ²⁰ On the 18th of May the Constituent Assembly will meet to finalise our new Constitution which has already been drafted ²¹ Probably this work will be completed by the end of June or early in July

18 He had a heart attack on 5 March 1948

19 Haile Selassie (1891-1975) Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1936 when Italy annexed the country He was restored in 1941 by the Allies but was deposed in a *coup* in 1974

20 On 25 April the A I C C increased the members of the Working Committee to twenty of which two thirds would be selected by the President from outside the ranks of the Ministers It also set up an Economic Standing Committee to examine Government's industrial policy so that it would be in accord with the recommendations of the Congress Economic Committee Nehru criticized the constraint on the President in selecting the members He agreed that the Congress could lay down an outline of the policy but said it would be impossible for any government to function if it was dictated to always in regard to details

21 The Draft was presented to the Constituent Assembly on 21 February 1948

New Delhi
2 May 1948

My dear Premier *

I am writing to you separately apart from my usual fortnightly letter to draw your attention to a particular development that is taking place. Perhaps you may have yourself noticed some such development in your province.

Reports from many sources have reached me that the communal atmosphere is again becoming tense and that particularly the people who belong to the R S S and those who think with them are becoming vocal and demonstrative again. The demonstration part is not very aggressive yet and usually takes some other form. Nevertheless it seems clear that there is a definite attempt to spread communal bitterness and thereby create a sense of insecurity. When such an atmosphere is produced it is easy for incidents to occur and when incidents occur they might well lead to bigger consequences.

Many of the R S S men who had been arrested previously, detained in prison for sometime and then subsequently released, are again taking some part in these activities in spite of assurances they might have given.

The overall communal situation has improved in many ways in recent weeks. The Inter Dominion Conference which was held in Calcutta recently led to a substantial agreement¹ which immediately resulted in a marked improvement in East and West Bengal. The migration from East to West Bengal stopped and there was a general feeling all over the country that our problems were being solved.

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1 See ante p. 107.

New Delhi
5 May 1948

My dear Premier

I must apologise to you for the delay in sending my fortnightly letter. I need not explain the reasons for the delay and I am sure you will understand.

2 During the last two days an Inter Dominion Conference was held in New Delhi to consider the question of disposal of canal water from East Punjab to West Punjab. The canal head works are in East Punjab and it was claimed by that Government that they had full ownership over the disposal of water by virtue of certain agreements and the arbitral award etc. The West Punjab Government on the other hand insisted on their right to have the water regardless of other circumstances. Early in April the East Punjab Government stopped the supply with unfortunate consequences for certain crops in the Lahore district of West Punjab. Later water was allowed to flow again through the canals of that area in West Punjab.

3 The old irrigation system of the Punjab concentrated in what is now West Punjab and East Punjab suffered greatly. Thus Hissar and other districts became scarcity areas liable to frequent famine. The East Punjab Government naturally are very anxious to develop these areas in their province. The West Punjab Government on the other hand is equally anxious not to have its water supply by means of rivers and canals lessened.

4 Questions of law and fact arose and there was a complete deadlock. Ultimately a somewhat provisional agreement was

the activities of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen and the Razakars
/That shows a certain national solidarity which is very welcome

Some element of danger may come from other quarters that is the extreme Hindu communalists who might take advantage of a developing situation and create trouble in various parts of India That trouble will of course weaken the hands of Government in dealing with the Hyderabad situation as such

For this and other reasons it is extremely important that no opportunity be given to the people of the R S S and their like to organise themselves and function in their own way I suggest to you therefore that you might let your government keep a watchful eye on these communal elements and take steps again against such individuals as may be considered dangerous We must not be caught napping and we cannot afford to be complacent

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

does not mean any outright rejection because no question of rejection arose ⁴ The Security Council had made certain recommendations Whether the Commission will come out now or not is not clear We do not think that a Commission can do much good if it considers itself bound by all the provisions of the Security Council's resolution If nevertheless the Commission does come we have stated that we will be prepared to confer with it We have to face a difficult situation politically in regard to Kashmir We feel that we have not been given a square deal and we cannot agree to certain propositions which we consider very harmful At the same time we do not wish to be discourteous to the United Nations

7 Probably future developments will be largely affected by the military situation That is favourable to us and I expect a marked change for the better in the course of this month

8 *Hyderabad*—There has been no fresh development except that feeling in the Indian Union has grown against the Hyderabad Government and insistent demands are being made upon us to take effective action ⁵ This feeling was represented at the recent meeting of the A I C C in Bombay ⁶

9 Our own information derived from our diplomatic representations overseas is that the Hyderabad Government continue to make frantic efforts to get arms and ammunition from abroad Recently an approach was made to this effect to

4 Lodging a formal protest the Government of India informed the Security Council that India could not implement those parts of the resolution to which objection had been raised by the Indian delegation It however agreed to confer with the Commission if the Council should still decide to send it

5 For example the Socialist Party's Hyderabad Struggle Committee in a statement on 10 April 1948 demanded "direct armed intervention by the Government of India Also a deputation of Andhra Congressmen called on Nehru on 25 April to urge strong action by the Indian Government

6 The A I C C held a secret session to discuss the Hyderabad situation on 25 April 1948

arrived at which you will no doubt have seen in the press ¹ This recognises the East Punjab's necessity and right to use more and more water for its own areas. At the same time, it also recognises the need of accommodating West Punjab and of giving them time to tap other sources. It is, I think, a fair agreement to both sides, but the matter has not been finally settled and after further data have been collected, additional meetings on an inter provincial or Inter Dominion level are likely to take place.

5 This is a good example of how a difficult situation involving vital interests of the parties concerned can be tackled in a cooperative way. Obviously, a breakdown of negotiations on this issue would have had far reaching results for all parties concerned in many other matters. We hope and believe that this settlement will lead to an easing of the situation all round vis a vis India and Pakistan, and more specially East and West Punjab.

6 *Kashmir*—The Government of India have informed the Security Council that they cannot accept certain parts of the resolution² passed by the Security Council and they have supported fully the attitude taken up by their delegation.³ This

1 The Inter Dominion Agreement of 4 May 1948 while recognising the proprietary rights of the East Punjab Government to the canal waters also accepted the West Punjab's claim over the waters under international law and the law of equity. East Punjab agreed to allow the flow of water.

2 For holding a plebiscite in Kashmir under U.N. auspices the Security Council resolution of 21 April 1948 stipulated that Pakistan should withdraw the tribesmen and other nationals from Kashmir and agree to a ceasefire. India should also progressively reduce her forces in Kashmir to the minimum necessary for the defence of the state and ensure setting up of an impartial administration prior to the appointment of a plebiscite administrator responsible to the U.N. Secretary General.

3 The Indian delegation stated that the Security Council resolution paid scant attention to India's main complaint and tended to make her look like a "co-accused" for it failed to recognise India's obligation to defend the state against external aggression. India also took exception to a plebiscite administrator being conferred with wide powers which included dealing directly with Pakistan.

of our commitments in Kashmir the necessity of maintaining sufficient strength in the East Punjab and the needs of internal security in other parts of India. We must therefore for larger reasons avoid conflicts which have dangerous potentialities but we must also be fully prepared to take any action that may become necessary. I wish to inform you that we are taking all steps for this preparation military or other. We shall continue our attempt to bring about a peaceful solution of the problem but we will not tolerate any disturbances on our borders or elsewhere. The position has been made perfectly clear to the Hyderabad Government. We feel that the immediate issue is the curbing of the Razakars and a change in the present Hyderabad Government which is dominated by the Razakars.

13 The situation in the states has developed and is developing. One of the largest unions of states is the one which has just been agreed to in Malwa that of Gwalior Indore and certain other states in Central India.⁹ The notable feature of this Union is that it recognises many additional common subjects with the Indian Union and in this regard approaches the level of the Indian provinces. This is a significant advance. The States Ministry is holding a conference shortly of the Rajpramukhs¹⁰ and other leaders of the states with a view to revise the Instruments of Accession on these lines.¹¹ The Ministry is tackling now the union of the Punjab states.¹²

9 The covenant of the United State of Madhya Bharat was signed by twenty states on 22 April 1948. The state was formally inaugurated on 28 May.

10 Heads of the newly merged states.

11 While the earlier Instrument of Accession provided for access on of states only in respect of three subjects—defence foreign affairs and communications the revised Instrument agreed upon at a meeting on 6-7 May 1948 put the Unions of states on par with the provinces.

12 The covenant for the creation of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union was signed on 5 May 1948 and the Union of Pepsu comprising eight states was formally inaugurated on 15 July.

a Canadian firm. The matter was referred to us by the Government of Canada and we naturally took strong exception to the sale of any military equipment to Hyderabad.

10 *Goa*⁷ — The Hyderabad Government have continued to make attempts to gain a foothold in Goa. An old industrialist of the United Kingdom,⁸ who has been known to us from his previous contact with India as being extremely reactionary, has been functioning as a go-between with the Portuguese authorities. We have indicated to the Portuguese Government in the clearest terms that we would regard any encouragement given to Hyderabad in this direction a hostile act against India.

11 All these activities of the Hyderabad Government are definitely breaches of the Standstill Agreement. That government again approached the American Embassy in London and asked for the good offices of the American Government in making contacts for their chief electrical engineer. When this matter was referred to us, we made it clear again that we were entirely opposed to any direct dealings between Hyderabad and foreign governments. All these attempts on the part of Hyderabad indicate a general policy which is a breach of the Standstill Agreement and is deliberately provocative.

12 Some provincial governments are perhaps thinking that we are not taking a strong enough line with Hyderabad. This is not so and I want you to feel that we are giving the fullest thought to this matter and taking all necessary steps to deal with any situation. Naturally, no government embarks without serious thought on any steps which might lead to far-reaching consequences. Every government also has to view each particular problem in the context of the whole of India and other problems. From a military point of view, we have to think

7 Goa, Daman and Diu on the Arabian Sea coast were the Portuguese settlements at this time.

8 Sydney Cotton, an Australian, engaged in business in Britain.

5 May 1948

away when the Muslim League members joined the old Executive Council¹⁴

16 I would like you to give some thought in your province also to the question of the reorganisation of government machinery with a view to seeing whether it is functioning at the maximum possible level of efficiency. There is a great deal of complaint from the public about our inefficiency, inaccessibility, delays and above all of corruption. I fear that many of these complaints are justified. We are perhaps busy as all of us are in our respective offices. We are rather apt to grow self complacent and imagine that all is well in this best of all possible worlds. I suggest that all of us should remember always Lord Acton's famous dictum about power.

17 This leads me to the various security measures that have been taken by the Central and provincial governments.¹⁵ I have no doubt that essentially these have been necessary. We have seen how a certain slackness on the part of government in Burma has led to widespread disorder and even rebellion. We live in India in a strange and abnormal atmosphere, the aftermath of the occurrences in the Punjab and elsewhere. There are vast masses of refugees full of bitterness. Any relaxation of vigilance may lead to disastrous consequences.

18 Nevertheless the fact remains that once large powers are given to executive and police officers they are likely to be misused. Indeed, I have had instances of such misuse. I am sorry to say that all the reputation that we acquired in the past

14 While the Congress had joined the Executive Council to form an Interim Government on 2 September 1946, the Muslim League joined the Government on 26 October 1946.

15 Powers of detention and arrest were given to the local police at this time in a number of provinces under Public Safety Acts. As a number of detainees were acquitted by the High Courts under habeas corpus, some of the provinces passed ordinances denying High Courts the right to decide on such detentions.

14 The progress made in the states on the purely political plane is highly satisfactory but political changes are merely a means to an end and unless they are accompanied by administrative action and social change they might become almost meaningless. One of the great dangers to Indian states—a danger which to a large extent we escaped in Indian provinces—is the administrative vacuum that has been created since the 15th August. Few states have an appropriate administrative machinery or departments dealing with nation building activities. So long as the paramount power was in existence a certain rather low standard of administration was maintained. The machine worked though at a low level and the paramount power could to some extent control the discontent arising out of maladministration. With the lapse of paramountcy and the unleashing of popular forces it is of the utmost importance to create in the states an administrative apparatus that will deal efficiently and sympathetically with the urgent needs of the population. The need for creating such an apparatus becomes all the greater when unions are formed because the conception of a union is a new conception involving a new loyalty.

15 As a matter of fact the question of overhauling the administrative machinery of government is very much before us. My experience here has led me to the conclusion that our present machinery is to some extent archaic, and is certainly not conducive to rapid and efficient handling of matters. There is a great deal of lack of coordination and red tape and unnecessary noting. There are bottlenecks and the best of schemes are held up somewhere for weeks and even months. Our Cabinet here is considering this matter and we might revive the coordination committee of the Cabinet¹³ which faded

13 At the meeting of the Union Cabinet on 20 April 1948 Nehru proposed the revival of a coordination committee of the Cabinet to help implement Cabinet decisions expeditiously. Sardar Patel however was not in favour for fear that such a committee might supersede ministerial authority.

5 May 1948

dependence on foreign sources for petrol diesel oil furnace oil etc I am afraid there has been no marked improvement in the situation and the London Conference that we had recently has not yielded results ¹⁶ We have therefore been forced to cut down drastically the basic petrol ration We are trying to develop other sources but that will take time

23 The recent Inter Dominion Conference held in Calcutta yielded satisfactory results in many ways How far those decisions will be implemented by Pakistan remains to be seen But one very good result has already followed and that is the stoppage of the exodus from East Bengal to West Bengal Already over a million persons are said to have migrated to West Bengal I hope there will be no further migrations This will depend on the overall situation and on other factors like Hyderabad I cannot imagine a more disastrous development than the mass migration from East to West Bengal

24 We have had to face a difficult situation in regard to these migrations in other places also Non Muslims continue to come out from Sind and elsewhere In addition to these large numbers of Muslims are returning from Pakistan to India ¹⁷ While we welcome this as indicating a return to normality and the faith of these Muslims in the security offered by India this one way traffic is extraordinarily embarrassing We just have not got room or accommodation As it is we have done little to help vast numbers of refugees and now if a double one way traffic continues we might well be overwhelmed by this problem Our general instructions are that while movement should be free so far as any group movement is concerned it should be checked till permission is obtained and arrangements made

16 See ante p 90

17 For instance it was reported that by the end of April 1948 about 8 000 Meo families had returned from Pakistan to Gurgaon in Haryana

as defenders of civil liberty and freedom is fading away Our stock in the world had been high It is not so high now and deputations and complaints have gone to our Ambassadors about various happenings in India

19 The Government of India suggested to provincial governments some time back that special individuals suspected of dangerous activities leading to sabotage might be arrested and detained The situation was a difficult one and there was a possibility then of big scale trouble In making these arrests provincial governments adopted a varying procedure Some arrested a few persons whom they specially suspect others made large scale arrests which could hardly be justified on individual grounds

20 I am rather worried about this tendency all over India to use special measures against people we may not like Even when temporarily justified this creates the wrong kind of back ground and more and more we depend upon these special measures and the police In the long run and even in the short run this is bad for the country for the people and for the Congress which is held responsible I would therefore beg of you to examine this matter carefully The responsibility for your provinces is of course yours and we should not like to interfere with it in any way

21 I am particularly concerned about the growth of corruption both at the Centre and in the provinces This must be tackled efficiently or else we shall sink in this morass One of our immediate problems is transport We lack wagons locomotives etc but I think there could be a considerable improvement if the element of corruption was removed This of course applies to all departments It is generally said by the public that they cannot get anything done without some kind of bribery to some official

22 I have written to you previously about our utter

New Delhi
20 May 1948

My dear Premier

I must again apologise to you for the delay in this letter. I have been having a brief holiday at Mashobra¹

2 The international situation has as you know flared up in Palestine and a bitter small scale war is going on there² I must say that the U S A Government have handled the Palestine question with quite extraordinary ineptitude and opportunism³ It is difficult to say whether this war will continue or end soon⁴ I imagine that it cannot continue for very long as in any event the area is very limited. It appears also that the King of Transjordan⁵ is playing a hand mainly in his

1 Near Shimla part of the Viceregal estate

2 When the British mandate in Palestine terminated on the night of 14-15 May 1948 an independent State of Israel was proclaimed by the Jewish Agency and Palestine invaded by the regular forces of Egypt Syria Iraq Lebanon and Transjordan

3 The strong Arab protest against the partition of Palestine and the increasing American interests in oil bearing areas dominated U S thinking when it asked Britain in February 1948 not to terminate her mandate over Palestine and suggested setting up of the trusteeship of the United Nations. This was in sharp contrast to the earlier American stand of supporting the Jewish demand for a separate State

4 The truce brought into force on 11 June 1948 was observed intermittently till the terms of armistice were negotiated with Egypt Jordan Lebanon Iraq and Syria under the U N auspices in early 1949

5 Abdullah Hussein of Jordan (1892-1951) Emir 1921-46 King of Transjordan 1946-49 King of Jordan 1949-51 Assassinated by a Palestinian on 20 July 1951

25 We have noticed recently a recrudescence of communal movements. The old R S S is raising its head again in various forms and all kinds of rumours are afloat. I trust that your province will not permit this development. I would also like to draw your special attention to the resolution in regard to communal organisations passed by the Constituent Assembly¹⁸. We have stated that we will not recognise or encourage in any way any communal organisation which has political ends. I hope that your government will also follow this policy.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

¹⁸ The resolution passed on 3 April 1948 declared that no communal organisation should be permitted to engage in any activity other than what was essential for *bona fide* religious, cultural, social and educational needs of the community.



Taking the oath of office as India's first Prime Minister, 15 August 1947

own interests⁶ The fact that the U S A the U S S R and some other powers have hastened to recognise the State of Israel indicates that they will not look on and see the State crushed⁷ Probably the next few days will show whether this war is going to be a short one or a longish one

3 The Government of India have received a request from this new State of Israel for recognition We propose to take no action in this matter at present⁸ India can play no effective part in this conflict at the present stage either diplomatically or otherwise We can only watch events for the time being hoping that an opportunity may come when we could use our influence in the interests of peace and mediation The attitude that India has taken up over this matter in the past has been justified by subsequent events⁹ But these very events have made it difficult to go back to that particular position now

4 In spite of this war in Palestine I am still convinced that there is no likelihood of any large scale war in the near future that is to say for a year or more No country really wants a war in spite of the harsh language being used by statesmen

5 *Kashmir*—I spent three days in Kashmir in connection with

6 Abdullah had planned to recreate Biblical Syria by uniting Palestine Transjordan Lebanon and North West Iraq with himself as head This plan had earlier been announced in 1942 by Nuri el Said Prime Minister of Iraq but was criticized by Egypt and Saudi Arabia These two countries again expressed dissatisfaction with this plan when they refused to join an anti Zionist Pact signed by Transjordan Iraq Lebanon and Syria in April 1948

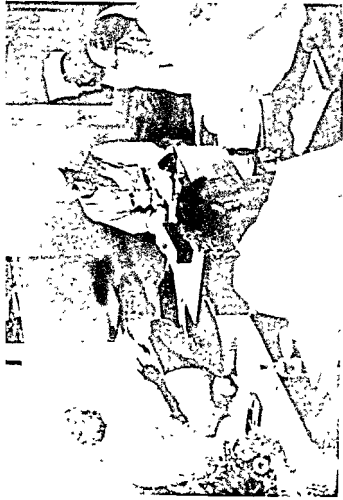
7 Israel was recognised by the United States on 15 May 1948 and by the Soviet Union two days later

8 India recognized Israel on 17 September 1950 but did not agree to diplomatic relations

9 India as a member of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine in its minority report to the General Assembly had suggested setting up of a federation in Palestine with fully autonomous Jewish and Arab units a special status for Jerusalem and a review if necessary of the whole problem after ten years The General Assembly however accepted the majority report to partition Palestine



At the Sangam Allahabad after the immersion of
Mahatma Gandhi's ashes 12 February 1948



With Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, V.K. Krishna Menon and Pyarelal
at Bhangi Colony, New Delhi, October 1947



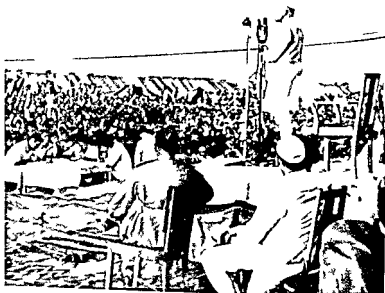
At the Sangam Allahabad after the immersion of
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With Mahatma Gandhi Rajendra Prasad V K Krishna Menon and Pyarelal
at Bhangi Colony New Delhi October 1947



With refugee children at Kurukshetra refugee camp
8 April 1948



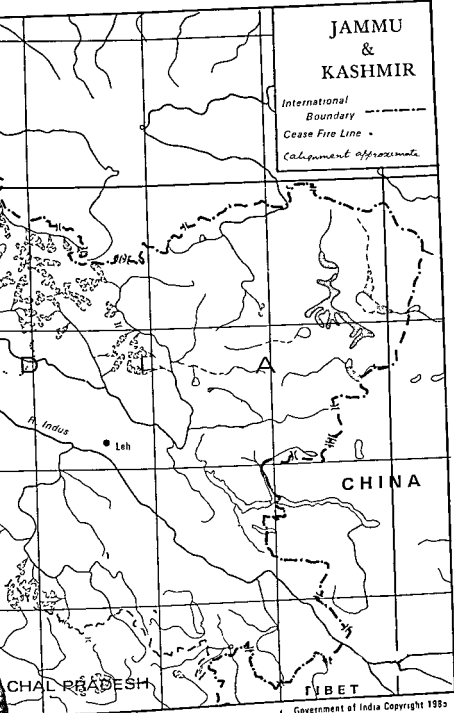
At Kurukshetra refugee camp 8 April 1948

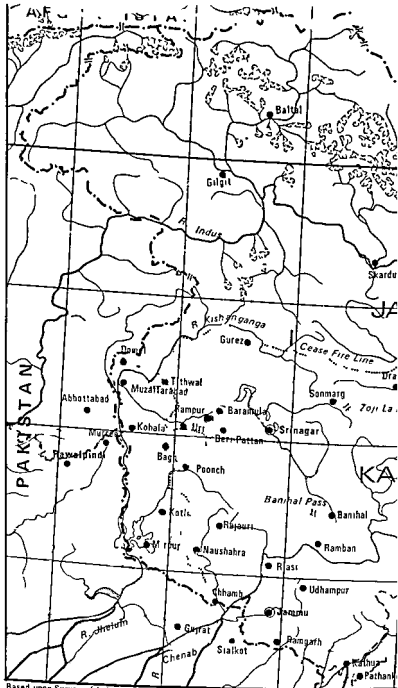
JAMMU & KASHMIR

International
Boundary

Cease Fire Line

Alignment approximate





Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the
Surveyor General of India

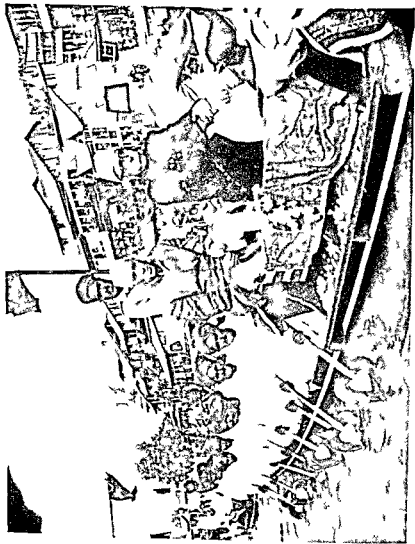




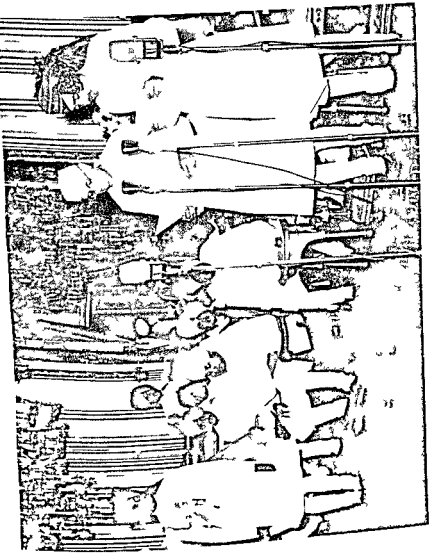
Inauguration of the construction of the Hirakud Dam
12 April 1948



With the jawans in Kashmir 10 May 1948



In Srinagar 10 May 1948



At the inauguration of the Madhya Bharat Union of States 28 May 1948

the independence celebrations there ¹⁰ These three days were refreshing and exhilarating to a degree. Not only was the climate ideal and the beauty of the valley overpowering, but the spirit of our troops and the people was most encouraging. It was a pleasure to see the problem being approached in a non-communal way and Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in Kashmir joining together in self defence.

6 I travelled over the Jammu Srinagar road *via* Banihal pass and saw at first hand the immense difficulties which the Indian Army had to face in keeping the garrison and the valley supplied during the winter. Even now the Banihal pass had masses of snow on either side. I visited also the Uri front which at present is our most important front. Our soldiers there, officers and men, were in high spirits and eager to justify themselves. Very probably we shall have news soon of action along this front.

7 Our information is that the Pakistan Army is definitely taking part in the Kashmir operations or at any rate, some battalions of that Army are taking part plus also supplying guns. We have captured Pakistan soldiers. The Quaid-i-Azam Fund¹¹ merged with the 'Azad Kashmir' Fund for relief.

8 The overall military situation has undoubtedly improved except in the distant region of Skardu and Kargil, which it is difficult for us to reach. Kargil has fallen to the enemy. We hope, however, to recover it soon. In order to get there, our troops have to pass over the Zoji La, the pass which leads into

10 The celebrations organized from 10 to 12 May 1948 by the Jammu and Kashmir Government marked the successful culmination of the movement led by the National Conference against the autocratic Dogra regime and installation of a popular government under Sheikh Abdullah.

11 On 12 September 1947 Jinnah started the Quaid-i-Azam's Relief Fund for assisting refugees.



With C. Rajagopalachari bidding farewell to the
Governor General Lord Mountbatten
21 June 1948

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way of helping Kashmir is for visitors to go there. At the present moment there is no more agreeable place for a holiday from every point of view. Srinagar and the valley have a delightful climate and are far more beautiful than any hill station. Living there is much cheaper and plenty of houses and house boats and tents are available at cheap rates. The famous arts and crafts of Kashmir are available at very reasonable rates much less than the usual prices. It would thus be to the advantage of visitors from the rest of India to go to Kashmir for a brief or long holiday. Owing to the development of air services the journey is a short one. The valley is quite safe from military operations. It would be desirable therefore to encourage visitors to go to Srinagar.

11 *Hyderabad* — There has been no improvement in the situation in Hyderabad. There is a consistent demand all over India for strong military action to be taken against Hyderabad state. India seems to have developed a military mentality. Naturally the army will be used whenever necessary. But it should be realised that military operations have to be viewed in the larger context and all possible consequences provided for. Our policy has been and is to prepare in every way and at the same time to keep the all India position in view. We are prepared but it will be wrong for us to be hustled into action before the time is ripe for it. It is very easy to begin operations but much more difficult to stop them. We have enough commitments.

12 We are thus ready. Meanwhile we have issued orders that the type of border incidents like the one which took place at Barsi¹⁴ recently will not be tolerated and action will be taken. We are indeed going to take action in regard to borders.

13 We realise that there are dangers in any delay. At the same time there are also dangers in precipitate action. Provincial governments should keep a watchful eye on the borders utilising

14 On 27 April 1948 the Hyderabad forces had indulged in acts of violence arson and loot in a village in Barsi taluka in Maharashtra.

from our point of view, and it may be of very considerable help to India and to Asian countries. I hope to inaugurate the session, and we are sending a strong delegation headed by Dr John Matthai¹⁷. I suggest that provincial governments study the proceedings of this session carefully. After the session is over we shall get in touch with them and consider what steps we might take.

17 The problem of refugees still continues to harass us, and I fear that progress is slow although there are many plans which are on the verge of taking formal shape. The responsibility is largely that of the Central Government, but we must make an appeal to all provinces to help to the utmost. The main question is to find gainful employment. We have thought too much in terms of professional employment. That, of course, has to be done. But I think we might very well start public works of any kind chiefly to give employment even though that might be largely manual employment.

18 The question of building cheap houses expeditiously with materials readily available has assumed considerable urgency. Bricks, cement, iron and steel are expensive as well as in short supply, and hence it is necessary to explore the possibilities of using cheaper and available materials. A committee of the Cabinet has been considering this, and we have undertaken to experiment in the building of model houses. Some such houses are nearly ready.

19 In this connection, I should like to draw your attention to the proposal made by the Agriculture Ministry in their letter No. 3913 F/48 dated 6th May, in which it is suggested that timber treated specially for the purpose might be used in place of steel. We already know that such timber can be used. This might go some way in meeting the shortage of steel.

¹⁷ (1886-1959) Union Minister for Railways 1947-48 and for Finance 1948-50.

their Home Guards etc , for the purpose The people on the borders should also be taught to organise themselves in self defence

14 *Communalism*—I have drawn your attention previously to the recrudescence of the communal spirit in some parts of India The R S S is again raising its head and in East Punjab there are various elements which seem to be heading for trouble It is unsafe and unwise for us to allow these tendencies to grow strong again and I hope that provincial governments will be vigilant in this respect The next few months may well be difficult ones and we can afford to take no risks

15 My attention has been drawn to the fact that in one province even the Congress Seva Dal has been banned ¹⁵ I think that this banning business should be limited to organisations which are definitely violent in their action and objectives or communal I should have thought that the Congress Seva Dal which is wedded to non violence and peaceful action certainly does not merit banning Indeed there are other organisations too which may be left to function within certain limitations We do not want any kind of private armies but obviously we are not banning the Boy Scouts and peaceful volunteer organisations which do not function in military formations

16 On the 1st of June, the third session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East of the United Nations is going to meet at Ootacamund ¹⁶ This Commission is important

15 As part of the exercise to ban all uniformed cadres of political parties performing drills and receiving some kind of physical training the Congress Seva Dal was banned in West Bengal

16 The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (E C A F E.) was established by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in March 1947 to initiate measures for economic reconstruction and promote economic relations between the Asian countries and strengthen such relations outside the region The first session was held in Shanghai in June 1947 the second in Baguio in the Philippines in November 1947 and the third at Udagamandalam (Ootacamund) in India from 1 to 16 June 1948

New Delhi
5 June, 1948

My dear Premier,

I am again late in writing to you my usual letter. I was away at Ootacamund where I went to attend the opening session of the *United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East*

2 This E C A F E meeting got stuck at the beginning on a semi political issue—the question of admitting Indonesia¹. The Indian delegate brought forward this proposal which seemed obvious enough from every point of view. For two valuable days there was argument about it and then it was referred to a small committee. There was, in fact, a majority in favour of this proposal. It was interesting to note that the countries opposed to it were the Netherlands, the U S A, the U K and France—countries which have special interests in South East Asia. Some other countries like China and the Philippines contented themselves by expressing their sympathy with Indonesia and at the same time remaining neutral. This alignment was itself significant of the kind of forces at play at this conference. The conference is carrying on its work. It will no doubt produce a number of resolutions but what is much more important is whether its work will lead to tangible results.

1 On 2 June 1948 while the Indian Government sponsored the representation of the Indonesian Republic the Netherlands pressed for representation of Indonesia by the Provisional Government. India was supported by the Soviet Union, Burma, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia and New Zealand.

20 There has been much reference in the press to the return to India of large numbers of Muslim evacuees. While we welcome this return as it shows that conditions in India are better than those in Pakistan, it is obvious that a one way traffic of this kind on any large scale creates difficulties and problems. We want to have freedom of movement and we want to place no restrictions on the return of Muslims to their old homes. But any large scale movement has to be checked and screened till proper arrangements can be made. In fact, ultimately there can be only two way traffic. Delhi city has especially suffered from this one way traffic. We are addressing the Government of Pakistan on this issue and at the same time taking steps to screen large scale movements.¹⁸

21 In the case of Muslims who left their homes for other parts of India temporarily in the disturbed conditions and who now have decided to return to their homes, the Custodian of Evacuee Property has been directed to use his discretion in returning the property to the evacuee.

22 Conditions on the East Bengal frontier have improved definitely as a result of the Inter Dominion Conference held at Calcutta. We hope to appoint an additional High Commissioner at Dacca soon.¹⁹

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

18 On 19 May 1948 the Government of India invited the Pakistan Government to discuss the feasibility of two way traffic of evacuees satisfactory to both Dominions so as to stop the one way traffic of Muslims to India on a large scale. On 21 July the Government put restrictions on entry of persons from Pakistan.

19 Surendra Mohan Ghosh was appointed Deputy High Commissioner at Dhaka in June 1948.

6 The Hyderabad situation has not improved and remains confused. It is possible that in the course of the next 10 or 12 days further developments might take place. The Nizam as usual when he is in a difficulty has sent for Sir Walter Monckton⁴ who has just arrived. Probably the Hyderabad representatives will come to Delhi soon. We do not propose to enter into any lengthy discussions with them or to repeat what we have said so often.

7 Recently an Inter Dominion Conference at secretariat level was held at Karachi to discuss the question of mutual exchange of essential commodities. I am glad to say that the conference arrived at a full agreement.⁵ Pakistan has undertaken to supply India our requirements of raw jute, raw cotton and foodgrains and in exchange we have agreed to supply Pakistan's requirements of coal, cotton, cloth and yarn, steel, paper and mustard oil to the extent it was possible to meet these requirements considering the needs of India.

8 While Inter Dominion Conferences often yield fruitful results, it cannot be said that the relations of India and Pakistan are at all happy. Both Kashmir and Hyderabad add to the prevailing tension. Recently a new development has taken place in West Punjab which is of the most serious consequence to East Punjab. The West Punjab Government are digging a new canal which may ultimately cut across an embankment and thus render the Ferozepore Headworks useless. This is not in consonance with an agreement recently arrived at between the two Dominions and if persisted in, can only lead to very serious consequences to both sides.⁶ We are in communication with the

4 (1891-1965) British lawyer who was Constitutional Adviser to the Nizam of Hyderabad.

5 The agreement was signed on 26 May 1948.

6 In a telegram to Zafarullah Khan of 5 June 1948, Nehru pointed out that digging a canal as an alternate source of supply of water to West Punjab is pregnant with dangerous possibilities because the new canal would endanger the existing canal waters passing through East Punjab.

3 In Kashmir there has been heavy fighting on the approaches to Domel and Muzaffarabad. This fighting is continuing with our forces gradually going ahead. There is little doubt that considerable Pakistan forces are taking part in this fighting. The capture of Domel and Muzaffarabad would be of primary importance as this will give us command over the bridge over the Kishanganga river near Domel. It is over this bridge that the original raiders came in October last and their reinforcements have continued to come that way.

4 The situation in Ladakh is obscure and it appears that relatively small bodies of hostiles are roaming about and doing mischief. It has been difficult to send our forces there because it is not easy to go across the Zoji La Pass even in spring. Now that weather conditions are better, our forces intend taking action in the Ladakh valley.

5 You will have noticed that the Security Council of the United Nations have extended the scope of the work of their proposed Kashmir Commission to include Junagadh genocide and some other matters.² This may have been done merely to dispose of these issues and without any serious thought. Nevertheless, it is an act of extreme discourtesy to India to persist in this way ignoring all the protests on behalf of India. This will not make any difference to our policy which has been clearly stated before. We cannot cooperate with this Commission except on the terms stated. If it comes here, we shall, of course, meet it and place our objections before it. We have made our position perfectly clear again in a message to the Security Council which is being released to the press.³

² By the resolution passed on 3 June 1948.

³ Nehru wrote to the President of the Security Council on 5 June that there can be no further question of the Commission proceeding to implement the resolution on Kashmir until the objections raised by the Government of India have been satisfactorily met. If, however, the Commission was visiting India they would like to know in advance the points on which it would wish to confer with them.

places. This has become a scandal of the first magnitude and must be dealt with firmly both by the Government of India and the provincial governments.

11 The Government of India participated in the multilateral tariff negotiations and discussions which took place at Geneva and Havana with a view to reach agreement on a charter for the establishment of an international trade organisation.¹¹ India also signed the final acts and the Havana Charter. An interim commission of the international trade organisation has been set up and India has a seat on the executive committee of this commission.

12 The Ministry of Education have addressed all provinces regarding the difficulties being experienced by refugee students from Pakistan in securing admission for technical and professional colleges and institutions owing to their not fulfilling the conditions laid down by some of the provincial governments regarding domicile. I need hardly remind you that these refugees are our responsibility and should be given full opportunities for admission.

13 The result of the South African election has recently been announced. A party which has expressed itself brutally in regard to Indians in South Africa has captured power.¹² This

11 Meetings of the preparatory committee set up by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to draft a charter for an international trade organisation took place at Geneva and Havana between April 1947 and March 1948. As there were differences over the draft of the charter, a General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) was arrived at between 23 countries of which India also became a member. The proposed trade organisation was, however, never established.

12 The Nationalist Party, committed to the policy of apartheid, formed a government with the support of the Afrikaner Party after it won the elections held on 26 May 1948. The party in its manifesto had described the Indian settlers as "a foreign and outlandish element" which could never become a part of the country and must therefore be treated as an immigrant community.

Pakistan Government on this issue and on the 15th of this month a meeting of India and Pakistan Prime Ministers will take place in Delhi ⁷

9 The rise in the price of cotton cloth and yarn as a result of decontrol in January has been causing great concern to Government ⁸ The Minister for Industry and Supply has already addressed you on this subject ⁹ The situation has to be carefully watched and if it does not show any improvement fairly soon, the question of reimposition of control and the form that it should take will have to be seriously considered Prices of cloth have gone up partly because of the rise in prices of cotton But this is only a partial explanation and there is no doubt that profiteering on a vast scale both by industry and trade has taken place It would appear that it is difficult to place any trust on the altruistic character of industry and trade It is expected to call a conference of ministers of provinces in Delhi to consider this position ¹⁰ I trust that you will give serious thought to the problem and give the Government of India your considered advice

10 The question arises as to what can be done not only to check profiteering but to punish those who have made abnormal profits this year Smuggling is going on on an extensive scale between India and Pakistan In the guise of personal luggage, bales of cloth are being brought from Ahmedabad and other

⁷ This meeting was postponed

⁸ Decontrol of production pricing and distribution of cotton yarn and cloth on 19 January 1948 and further relaxation on 21 April about stamping the price on manufactured cloth and abolition of the system of quotas led to blackmarketing and rise in prices ranging between 40 to 100% of different varieties of yarn and mill made cloth

⁹ S P Mookerjee in his letter of 19 May 1948 sought the views of the provincial governments on the proposed plan of the Central Government of freezing the free sale of mill made cloth and arranging its distribution through the state controlled corporations

¹⁰ The meeting in Delhi on 21 July 1948 recommended reimposition of control on cotton yarn and cloth

places This has become a scandal of the first magnitude and must be dealt with firmly both by the Government of India and the provincial governments

11 The Government of India participated in the multilateral tariff negotiations and discussions which took place at Geneva and Havana with a view to reach agreement on a charter for the establishment of an international trade organisation¹¹ India also signed the final acts and the Havana Charter An interim commission of the international trade organisation has been set up and India has a seat on the executive committee of this commission

12 The Ministry of Education have addressed all provinces regarding the difficulties being experienced by refugee students from Pakistan in securing admission for technical and professional colleges and institutions owing to their not fulfilling the conditions laid down by some of the provincial governments regarding domicile I need hardly remind you that these refugees are our responsibility and should be given full opportunities for admission

13 The result of the South African election has recently been announced A party which has expressed itself brutally in regard to Indians in South Africa has captured power¹² Thus

11 Meetings of the preparatory committee set up by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to draft a charter for an international trade organisation took place at Geneva and Havana between April 1947 and March 1948 As there were differences over the draft of the charter a General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) was arrived at between 23 countries of which India also became a member The proposed trade organisation was however never established

12 The Nationalist Party committed to the policy of apartheid formed a government with the support of the Afrikaner Party after it won the elections held on 26 May 1948 The party in its manifesto had described the Indian settlers as a foreign and outlandish element which could "never become a part of the country and must therefore be treated as an immigrant community"

Pakistan Government on this issue and on the 15th of this month a meeting of India and Pakistan Prime Ministers will take place in Delhi.⁷

9 The rise in the price of cotton cloth and yarn as a result of decontrol in January has been causing great concern to Government.⁸ The Minister for Industry and Supply has already addressed you on this subject.⁹ The situation has to be carefully watched and if it does not show any improvement fairly soon the question of reimposition of control and the form that it should take will have to be seriously considered. Prices of cloth have gone up partly because of the rise in prices of cotton. But this is only a partial explanation and there is no doubt that profiteering on a vast scale both by industry and trade has taken place. It would appear that it is difficult to place any trust on the altruistic character of industry and trade. It is expected to call a conference of ministers of provinces in Delhi to consider this position.¹⁰ I trust that you will give serious thought to the problem and give the Government of India your considered advice.

10 The question arises as to what can be done not only to check profiteering but to punish those who have made abnormal profits this year. Smuggling is going on on an extensive scale between India and Pakistan. In the guise of personal luggage, bales of cloth are being brought from Ahmedabad and other

7 This meeting was postponed.

8 Decontrol of production, pricing and distribution of cotton yarn and cloth on 19 January 1948 and further relaxation on 21 April about stamping the price on manufactured cloth and abolition of the system of quotas led to blackmarketing and rise in prices ranging between 40 to 100% of different varieties of yarn and mill made cloth.

9 S P Mookerjee in his letter of 19 May 1948 sought the views of the provincial governments on the proposed plan of the Central Government of freezing the free sale of mill made cloth and arranging its distribution through the state controlled corporations.

10 The meeting in Delhi on 21 July 1948 recommended reimposition of control on cotton yarn and cloth.

New Delhi
1 July 1948

My dear Premier

As you will no doubt have noticed I have skipped a fortnight and I did not write to you in the middle of June as I ought to have done. You will forgive me for this. I have been pretty well occupied during this last fortnight with the Hyderabad affairs, Kashmir, the Mountbattens¹ departure and the arrival of the new Governor General.²

2 For some odd reason which we have been unable to fathom there were widespread rumours for sometime past that trouble on a big scale is likely to break out on June 15th or thereabouts. These rumours were specially prevalent in Pakistan as well as East Punjab and Delhi. Some people even expected war to break out. There was no obvious reason why any of these calamities should happen nevertheless rumours persisted and disturbed the lives of innumerable people. Adequate precautions were taken and nothing did happen then or later. It is interesting to find out who starts these rumours and with what purpose. Obviously they do not rise out of nothing and there is some deliberate design about them. Our

means that Indians will have a much harder time now than even previously. What they will do will no doubt be decided by them. But it may be taken for granted that the Indian struggle for equality of treatment in South Africa will not end because of the result of this election.

14 I should like to draw your special attention to certain instructions that have been issued regarding the use of the national anthem and the national flag. I would add that the new emblem and crest of India i.e. the top of the Asoka column at Sarnath¹³ should not be used except by officers and individuals specially authorised to do so.

15 For some time past there have been rumours both in West Punjab and East Punjab and to some extent in Delhi to the effect that there might be trouble or even war between India and Pakistan. These rumours are grossly exaggerated. Nevertheless the effect of their persistence is itself disturbing. It seems that a number of people spread these rumours deliberately and in an organised way. Whatever the basis we have to be on our guard. I hope that all provinces will keep ready to meet any emergency that might arise. Their intelligence services should especially be kept up to the mark.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

¹³ Sarnath, eight km. north of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, where Buddha preached for the first time to his five former companions. There stands at Sarnath, among numerous Buddhist monuments, a column with the edicts of Emperor Asoka (c. 272-237 B.C.) of the Maurya dynasty.

destroy or weaken the present structure. There are the Communists who quite apart from their communism are at present engaged in creating as much trouble as possible not only in India but much more so in Burma Malaya³ etc. If they wanted to spread the ideology of communism they were welcome to do so provided there was no violence about. It must be remembered that in spite of considerable provocation the Communist Party has not been declared illegal in India except in Western Bengal. We have tried to avoid taking any steps restricting the functioning of organisations except when we were forced to as in regard to some communal organisations.

5 Even legitimate demands when made in this context of disruptive forces may become rather dangerous in the sense that they encourage disruption. Thus the demand for provincial redistribution and rectification of provincial boundaries is a perfectly legitimate demand and must claim attention. But in present circumstances to press the demand is to encourage the wrong tendencies in the country. First priority must necessarily be to preserve the unity strength and stability of India. Everything that comes in the way of that may prove harmful.

6 The preservation of this unity and stability of India largely depends upon the functioning of the Congress organisation which has brought a sense of unity. If that organisation weakens or is split up the one major cementing factor is removed and popular energy is diverted to the quarrels of rival factions.

7 The recent withdrawal of the Socialists from the Congress has already led to increasing bitterness. Elections have been

³ On 18 June 1948 an emergency was proclaimed in Malaya to take effective steps against the Communist Party which since February 1948 had resorted to direct action against the state by organising strikes and creating disturbances in tea estates.

Intelligence tells us only that there are rumours not who the originators are. I have little doubt that there are groups of people who spread these tales of impending disaster in order to unnerve our people and thus prepare the ground for mischief. There are plenty of mischief mongers and normally they are to be found among extreme communal groups—Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. We have to be very careful in watching the activities of these communal groups which continue to persist though they do not function quite so much in the open as they used to do.

3 I should like to draw your attention to a fairly recent development in Rajputana which is significant of how foolish people actually try to align themselves with the most dangerous causes simply because they do not like something that is happening. In some parts of Rajputana, notably Jodhpur and partly also in other states, certain Rajput elements, disliking the new democratic order that is taking shape, have organised themselves to combat it. They even go so far as to think of intriguing with Pakistan. During a Rajput procession the following slogans were noticed:

Pakistan Zindabad

Kasim Razvi Zindabad

This is astonishing enough. Obviously the Rajputs had no particular sympathy for either Pakistan or Kasim Razvi. But they were so much enraged at the coming new democratic order which they feared might affect their vested interests in land and in the state generally that they were prepared to ally themselves with every enemy of the Indian Union.

4 I mention this as a significant indication of how destructive forces work. Apart from its inherent badness, it shows very limited understanding and gross folly. Today in India there are obviously powerful forces at work for unity and stability. But we cannot ignore certain strong tendencies towards disruption and certain anti-social elements which are taking advantage of these tendencies. There are the communalists of all groups who have no constructive programme or objective and who only wish to

succeed. He failed. There has been no settlement and there is no prospect of a settlement on those lines.⁶

11 There has been much public criticism in which responsible persons have joined about what is called the soft and appeasement policy of the Government of India towards Hyderabad. Action is demanded of us that action being a military invasion of Hyderabad. As you know we moved our armies and armoury to the Hyderabad frontier sometime ago and they are there now. If necessary they can take action.

12 To talk of appeasement etc, or of any partiality for the Nizam or his government is absurd. If the Government of India adopted a certain policy it is based entirely on practical considerations and on what they imagine to be India's good. Naturally, much of the information in their possession is not available to the public. They have to consider a hundred factors and the repercussions of every step that they might take. They have many commitments at present military and other and in any event can any government enter light heartedly into war? At the same time every government worth its name must prepare for every conceivable contingency to the best of its ability. We have prepared for Hyderabad both from the military point of view and the economic and political. We shall undoubtedly take military action when we think the time is ripe for it. But you will appreciate that only those can judge of the rightness of the time who know all the facts and all commitments. It is rather irresponsible for people who do not know

6 The Nizam was asked by Mountbatten on 18 June to give his consent to the draft agreement agreed upon by his delegation. The draft envisaged the Nizam Government's acceptance of any legislation enacted by the Indian Parliament relating to defence, external affairs and communications; limit on the state forces; disbanding of its irregular forces; authorization to Indian forces to enter the state in times of emergency; and announcement of a decision to hold a plebiscite on the state's accession to India. The Nizam refused to accept any legislation not in the interests of his state or any interference in the state's internal administration.

all these facts to demand military action on a large scale which might entangle us and which might though certainly leading to our victory lead also to create suffering to large numbers of people. These people whether inside or outside Hyderabad have to be considered as citizens of India as they will undoubtedly be before very long. We have in other words to take a long distance view and not be swept away by some momentary passion.

13 I know well that the Hyderabad Government and the Razakars are misbehaving and causing much suffering to the people there. But I would add a slight note of warning in regard to believing every rumour and unverified report that comes out. We have found on several occasions that some reports have no basis in fact or are exaggerated. Nevertheless it is true that conditions in Hyderabad are bad for the people and are deteriorating. Considerable numbers of persons are migrating from Hyderabad.

14 How are we to meet this situation? We suggested certain terms of agreement which have been criticised by some leading persons. It is easy to criticise them as one can criticise anything. But the point to be noted was whether those terms of agreement if finally ratified gave us a firm grip of the situation or not. Once the power of the Razakars etc. was broken other forces would have free play. Therefore it is not good enough to consider these matters from a theoretical point of view but to see how they fit into the present and how far they lead to our goal. I am convinced that the terms we offered were good from every point of view though I could have easily improved upon them. Now these terms are out of date and there is no question of our carrying on long or short negotiations with the present Hyderabad Government. Other factors will decide the issue now. I would warn you against believing rumours and statements in the press about fresh negotiations. There have been none and there will be none with the existing Hyderabad Government.

15 The present position in regard to Hyderabad is this We are ready at short notice to invade Hyderabad But we propose to wait for developments and to avoid such invasion if we can help it because of the other consequences that it is bound to bring in its train Meanwhile the economic blockade will continue and to that will be added other measures for instance financial and in regard to the stoppage of many kinds of communications There are other ways too which I need not mention here *We feel that this is a surer way of dealing with the situation at present* But as I have pointed out we are ready for any other method also as soon as we are convinced that this is necessary Hyderabad has suffered a lot from the economic blockade Undoubtedly the pressure of this blockade is very great though not very demonstrative I might point out that we are not stopping food or medical supplies We have to act as civilised nations and not descend to the Hyderabad level of conduct

16 In Kashmir the military situation has been generally good and we have made progress The capture of Gurez is important It is true however that our progress has not been quite so swift as we had hoped The reason for this has been the throwing in by Pakistan of considerable numbers of its regular troops more specially on the Uri Domel front There is no doubt about this now In fact our armies are fighting a part of the Pakistan Army in a very difficult terrain which gives a great advantage for defence This raises political issues of great magnitude It also complicates the military problems in the sense that it delays results somewhat *We are taking steps however to meet this new situation more effectively*

17 I visited Kashmir two or three days ago and conferred with our military commanders and representatives of the Kashmir Government ⁷ I visited Sonmarg and Baltal also The latter place is situated at the foot of the Zoji La Pass I must tell

7 On 27-28 June 1948

you that every time I have visited Kashmir, I have been very greatly impressed by the quality and morale of our troops. They are a fine type of men of whom any country can be proud. Many of us have no conception of the tremendous difficulties they have had to face. I have myself seen our pickets at about 15 000 feet altitude. As for our airmen, I can hardly speak in terms of sufficient praise for their courage and daring.

18 Within a few days the Kashmir Commission of the United Nations Security Council will be reaching India⁸ and there is much speculation, not unmixed with apprehension, as to what it might do. We have not welcomed the coming of this Commission and we have thoroughly disapproved of the resolution of the Security Council. We have stated, however, that we are prepared to meet the Commission and have talks with them. This Commission, it should be realised, is nothing more than a *Good Offices Committee* which can only offer advice and nothing more. We do not propose to resile in any way whatever from the attitude we have taken up in the Security Council on this subject. No question arises there to begin with except the removal of the aggressor, stoppage of fighting and the return to peaceful conditions and some normality. We do not propose to be hustled by this Commission in any way. But we shall treat them with all courtesy and at the same time with all firmness. The fact that Pakistan armies are functioning in Kashmir will, of course, be an important factor.

19 Our commitments in Kashmir, Hyderabad and elsewhere necessitate our keeping up the defence services at a certain level and indeed to add to them. We are taking steps to that end. In addition, we hope to have the militia functioning fairly soon and in this we shall require your government's full and urgent

⁸ The Commission arrived in India on 10 July 1948 after its first meeting at Geneva on 15 June. In his telegram to the Chairman of the Commission on 26 June, Nehru informed him of his Government's inability to appoint a liaison officer till the Commission had conferred with it.

cooperation Further the Government have decided to form a National Cadet Corps⁹ organisation throughout the country to provide military training for boys and girls in schools and colleges To begin with we have placed limited targets But we shall immediately enlarge these as soon as the first target is reached

20 Some provinces have schemes of their own for this kind of military training and some of these are good But it is obviously necessary to concentrate on one thing at a time and do it well The Government of India have therefore requested the provinces to concentrate on this National Cadet Corps scheme for the present and not to fritter away their limited energies on other schemes which may be vaster For the present therefore the Government of India cannot sponsor or render assistance to any other scheme of military training in the provinces either in the shape of instructors or equipment I trust that this attitude of the Government of India will be appreciated by the provinces and will receive their entire support

21 I should like to draw your attention to a step that we have taken in regard to the Posts and Telegraphs Department We are creating an independent appellate tribunal to deal with appeals from this department We are doing this in common with some other countries both to expedite the disposal of long pending matters and to make the Posts and Telegraphs staff feel that they will get a square deal The tribunal will consist of a judicial officer and one retired senior officer of the department To them will be added as assessors men actually in service selected by a recognised union of workers This is a novel experiment and its progress will be watched by Government with considerable interest For the present this will be confined to one circle but it will be extended if the experiment succeeds

⁹ See ante p 16

22 You will have noticed that Shri Mohanlal Saksena¹⁰ has been appointed Minister of State for Relief and Rehabilitation. As Minister of State, he will not be a full member of the Cabinet but will attend Cabinet meetings when any subject relating to his Ministry is under discussion. The Minister without Portfolio will be in charge of the inter dominion negotiations in regard to the refugees problems.

23 I shall only refer briefly to a subject of vast and overriding importance that is the deterioration of the economic situation in the country and the rise in the cost of living index.¹¹ We have watched with grave concern the rise in prices of food¹² and cloth. It is true that there has been some small fall recently in prices. Nevertheless the cost of living index is very high and is affecting our entire economy. We have been dealing with these matters in a piecemeal way with no satisfactory results. We can afford to do so no longer. I would invite your attention to this extremely important matter and would welcome your suggestions.

24 As you know, Governors of provinces have been sending me fortnightly letters of which copies have been sent to you. I am now suggesting to them to send their fortnightly letters directly to the Governor General, sending a copy of it to you and to me. You will, of course, be good enough to continue sending me your fortnightly letters.

25 We informed you sometime ago of the decision of the Government of India about the provisional use of *Jana Gana Mana* as the national anthem. The final decision will, of course,

10 (1896-1965) Secretary of U.P. Provincial Congress Committee 1928-55 Union Minister for Rehabilitation 1948-50

11 For instance, the cost of living index for Bombay stood at 292 in June 1948 compared to 278 in May and 258 in January.

12 The index numbers of wholesale prices for food articles stood at 377.0 in June 1948 compared to 357.6 in May and 347.7 in January.

be taken by the Constituent Assembly¹³ Even this provisional decision was taken after months of careful consideration of the problem in all its aspects It was in fact rather a recognition of a growing practice in the services and elsewhere A national anthem is absolutely necessary for our foreign embassies and defence services and we had to suggest to them something even though provisionally One Premier¹⁴ of a province has protested against this decision and said that he prefers greatly the *Vande Mataram*¹⁵ Needless to say the *Vande Mataram* is a cherished song and tune and must remain so But for a variety of reasons into which I need not go now most of us were firmly convinced that *Jana Gana Mana* was far more suited both for domestic and foreign use and the latter is more important than the *Vande Mataram* *Vande Mataram* represents very effectively the long period of our struggle and it will ever remain as a national song which inspires our people But after the struggle is over some other motive comes into play and the most important element of a national anthem is the tune We were definitely of opinion that *Jana Gana Mana* was a more effective attractive and distinctive tune than *Vande Mataram* Some months practice of it in India and abroad convinced us of this In other countries this has been greatly appreciated

13 On 11 June 1948 the Government adopted *Jana Gana Mana* as the national anthem as an interim arrangement It was formally approved by the Constituent Assembly on 24 January 1950

14 B C Roy (1882-1962) Physician and Congressman of Calcutta Chief Minister of West Bengal from 1948 till his death

15 This was first published in 1882 in Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Bengali novel *Ananda Math* and sung on the occasion of the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1896 It was adopted as a national song by the Constituent Assembly on 24 January 1950

26 The world situation is critical and recent developments in Berlin might almost lead to war¹⁶ I do not myself think that they will lead to war but we cannot rule out the possibility We have therefore to be prepared for this terribly worsening international situation That leads us again to what I have written at the beginning of this letter, that is to concentrate all our energies to build up the unity strength and stability of India and not to divert our energy to secondary purposes

27 Some criticisms have been made of our Ambassadors abroad It is difficult for me to correct or answer these criticisms in public I should like to say however, that generally speaking our Ambassadors are functioning very well and some of them have achieved remarkable success Naturally their work is behind the scenes and cannot easily be explained to the public Press reports are often incorrect For instance Dr Syed Hossain¹⁷ our Ambassador in Cairo was criticised for something he was reported to have said On enquiry we found that he had not said it He is facing a difficult situation and he has been handling it with ability

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

16 According to the Potsdam Agreement of 1945 Germany was to be treated as a single economic unit by the four occupying Allied forces This agreement was however not implemented and in March 1948 the United States Britain and France agreed to a joint administration of their zones with stringent traffic and currency regulations The eight East European countries meeting at Warsaw in June 1948 ostensibly to decide on the future of Germany called for demilitarization of Germany formation of a provisional government signing of a peace treaty and withdrawal of foreign troops The situation continued to be tense as both sides failed in their meeting on 24 June to reach any agreement on the question of common currency As an immediate reaction the Soviets stopped railroad connections and supply of electric power and foodstuffs to the western occupied Berlin

17 Syed Hossain (1886-1949) Editor of the *Independent* 1919 India's first ambassador to Egypt

New Delhi
15 July 1948

My dear Premier

The last fortnight has seen many developments in both the Hyderabad and Kashmir situations. The sterling balances negotiations have resulted in an agreement between India and the U.K. Government for a period of three years.¹ This agreement will soon be published. The economic situation continues to cause us grave anxiety more specially in relation to the rise in prices and the cost of living index and the question of controls is again being raised in various parts of India.

2. Abroad war has broken out again in Palestine² and the situation in Berlin is still very tense and difficult.³ Normally such a situation would lead to war which of course would mean something like world war. But in spite of aggressive

1. By the agreement signed at London on 8 July the British Government released till June 1950 an additional sum of £ 80 million which was added to the unspent balance of £ 80 million from the earlier releases out of which £ 15 million were convertible in hard currencies during the first year and in full and final settlement for the transfer of British military stores and installations valued at £ 375 million the British Government was to get £ 100 million. A pension scheme was also drawn up for retired British officers.

2. See *ante* pp. 127-28.

3. Britain, United States and France, asserting that Berlin was an international zone of occupation, protested on 8 July against the Soviet imposition of restrictions on travel and transport facilities to the city. In reply the Soviet Union accused the Western powers of violating the Potsdam Agreement and demanded negotiations for Germany "as a whole" and not for the city of Berlin alone. However, despite further tightening of travel restrictions by the Soviets and protests on 10 July against violation of air space, the airlifting of goods to Berlin was continued by the Western nations.

utterances and threats no country really wants war and so very probably the situation will be tided over somehow. Even so the essential causes of conflict remain and we shall continue to live tensely and anxiously.

3 I do not wish to discuss this European situation here or to criticise this great power or that in a superior way. But there does appear to be an increasing tendency for statesmen of high position to rattle their sabres.⁴ This practice when indulged in too often may well lead to unforeseen consequences.

4 In Palestine the situation is a very complicated one and it is not clear how any settlement can take place in the near future. In a military sense at present probably the Arabs are stronger. But the fact is that American and Russian prestige are involved in maintaining the new State of Israel and it will not be easy for the Arabs to win through. What the final end of all this will be therefore it is very difficult to say. Both sides feel passionately about their position and are hard fighters. In the past India has generally sympathised with the Arab case in Palestine though with some reservations. The position we took up in the United Nations represented this attitude which I still think was the correct one. However neither party approved of it. In the present struggle there India does not want to be involved. We have enough trouble of our own.

5 In Hyderabad various financial and other steps have been taken by the Government of India which must produce definite results.⁵ Productive work in Hyderabad is coming to a stand still. It is unfortunate that this kind of economic blockade

4 For example on 10 July 1948 Winston Churchill called upon all Western democracies to combine against communist intrigue and Russian imperialism.

5 Between 1 and 12 July 1948 the transfer of the securities from Hyderabad was restricted the agency services to the Hyderabad State Bank by the State (Imperial) Bank of India terminated and a ban imposed on export from India of gold jewellery and foreign currency to the state as also on air services.

should be applied, but it is far better and more humane than many other types of pressure. Many people perhaps do not realise the effectiveness of this step because the results are not sudden. Demands continue to be made in public for immediate military intervention. I am surprised to see even Ministers of provincial governments repeating this demand. Surely, they should appreciate that a situation cannot be judged in isolation, but in relation to all India. I cannot naturally write in detail about the developing situation in India except that it is full of dangerous potentialities and it is hardly responsible talk to ignore everything and ask for something to be done without relation to the rest. The situation in Hyderabad is undoubtedly a bad one. But it does not help to see out of perspective or to exaggerate the events that are happening there. We have found on enquiry that there is a good deal of exaggeration often enough although the realities are bad. We are fully seized of this situation and we are determined to deal with it effectively. In doing so we have to take not only the all India view but the long distance view. I trust that our colleagues in the provinces will give us some credit for appreciating the Hyderabad situation and paying full attention to it.

6 Recently reports appeared in the press about gun running by air between Karachi and Hyderabad. There is no doubt that this has been done by night flights by a gang of foreign adventurers who have got powerful planes and who use air fields near Karachi as their base. We have taken steps against this gang in England and elsewhere and we shall certainly shoot them down if we have the chance to do so on their flight. But it is not easy to intervene at night and to shoot down planes flying at twenty thousand feet. There is no doubt that arms have gone to Hyderabad but the quantity that a plane can take is not very great. The real difficulty of Hyderabad is lack of petrol. They had a stock of about two hundred thousand gallons but this is being rapidly depleted.

7 In Kashmir I regret to say there have been some setbacks

in the Ladakh area and round about Leh a company of our troops was surrounded by large numbers of the enemy and rather overwhelmed. The whole fighting in Kashmir has during the last few weeks undergone a very marked change. This is due to the practically open association of Pakistan regular troops in the fighting. In fact there is undeclared war in Kashmir between the Indian Army and the Pakistan Army. This has made a difference chiefly because the Pakistan Army has supplied mortars, howitzers, mountain batteries and the like. The terrain it will be remembered is exceedingly difficult.

8 The United Nations Commission on Kashmir is now in Delhi. They are proceeding in a leisurely fashion and for the present they have had one or two interviews with our Secretary General in the External Affairs Ministry. Our position is being explained to them clearly and firmly. I do not yet know what line they are likely to adopt but I imagine that they will be here for the next ten days or more. May I say here that it is undesirable for our newspapers or for any responsible public men to speak slightly of this Commission. That does not strengthen our position, it only irritates the members of the Commission and the U.N.O. We have decided to offer them every courtesy and at the same time to be perfectly firm in regard to our general attitude in Kashmir.

9 I referred in my last letter to the economic situation and asked you for any suggestions that you might make. This matter will be considered here in its various aspects and we may have to take vital decisions. The man with a fixed income in India is in a terrible position with these rising prices and a recent cartoon brought this out vividly.⁶ We have got into a vicious circle and it will require all our effort to get out of it.

⁶ The cartoon by K. Shankar Pillai was published on the cover page of *Shankar's Weekly* on 11 July 1948. See p. 336.

10 Taking an overall view of India at present, we see many constructive activities in progress in various provinces large schemes being implemented and plenty of hard work being done There is life and vitality in evidence in India Yet at the same time there are many serious dangers and the next few months may well be difficult for us Those dangers extend from possible war to economic chaos It is well therefore that all of us should realise that we live on the verge of serious crises and try to give priority in our thought and work to the solution of these crises I fear there is not this realisation and the danger to the country is not sufficiently appreciated Many people get rather excited about secondary matters which have no great importance in this context Party factions and provincialism flourish and weaken and distract us I do hope that your government will keep in view this all India situation and try to help in dealing with it

11 The negotiations on sterling balances have resulted in a three year agreement I shall not go into the details of this agreement here as it will be published soon Probably some parts of it will be criticised Indeed we were not happy in regard to some parts We feel however that it is not essentially an unreasonable agreement having regard to all the circumstances There has been no scaling down and we shall get adequate releases in the course of the next three years for our projects Apart from the agreement we have come to an understanding that in the third year if necessary further advances can be made to us Certain developments have taken place in many European countries like Switzerland Czechoslovakia Sweden Brazil etc , which enable us to use sterling there⁷ This will help us greatly Dollars are now required practically for the U S A only We have been promised help in the procurement not only of machinery but of *certain essential commodities*

⁷ For example Switzerland a hard currency area agreed to India paying her in sterling to the extent of India's adverse balance of payments with her

Pathankot to Jammu ⁹ Both this road and the bridge—indeed there are many bridges and causeways—are fine pieces of engineering work rapidly done in cooperation between our Central P W D and the Army

15 I am afraid that we have been very slow in the construction of new houses all over India in spite of a great demand for them Of course this is largely due to our lack of material Nevertheless we could have done much even with the existing material and I have seen many types of model houses built with existing material which are very good I suggest that each province should not wait for steel and cement all the time but should go ahead with such material as it possesses Apart from this we are thinking in terms of putting up soon a housing factory that is a factory which will produce pre fabricated houses ¹⁰ The material to be used will largely be local material easily available *If this factory is a success it may be desirable to erect further factories of that kind in different provinces* We sent an expert to Europe for this purpose and he has returned with full plans and specifications and we hope to go ahead soon with this project

16 Although essential houses are not being built or are being built very slowly luxury buildings still continue to be put up such as cinemas large bungalows large shops etc I think the time has come when such luxury construction should be prohibited It is a little difficult to describe luxury construction but *an easy way of doing so is to say that any building costing above a certain amount will require a special permission of government* This is a simple rule easily enforced The construction of cinemas should of course be completely prohibited for the time being Dwelling houses are more necessary If luxury construction is forbidden this will release materials for more essential

9 The Madhopur bridge on the river Ravi and the new road from Pathankot to Jammu were inaugurated by Nehru on 7 July 1948

10 The Hindustan Housing Factory set up in New Delhi in 1949 was later renamed as Hindustan Pre fabs Ltd

buildings and it will reduce black marketing also to some extent in those materials. Also it would have a far reaching psychological effect on our people. I commend this proposal to you. I understand that at least one provincial government is already proceeding on these lines.

17 The Education Ministry has brought to my notice the presence of a large number of college lecturers and teachers who have been thrown out of employment as a result of partition particularly from East Pakistan. It is a pity that qualified teachers and professors should lack employment when we are trying to extend opportunities for education. May I suggest to provincial governments that they might consult our Education Ministry as regards the availability of these refugee teachers before they employ new personnel? Many of these lecturers etc. were permanent government servants appointed as a result of selection by the Public Service Commission of the province or a Selection Board.

18 I continue to receive from foreign countries specially trade unions and labour organisations letters of protest and surprise at the internments that have taken place specially of trade union and labour leaders. I do not know what the exact position is in any province but I know that some of the activities of these labour leaders have been very injurious and have had little to do with labour. The matter is for each provincial government to consider. I do not want India to get a reputation among progressive circles abroad of a country which does not permit the fullest liberty in regard to labour work or other work. We are living in difficult times and anti social forces are working all round us. On the one hand we can take no risks when the very basis of freedom and security is involved on the other hand a tendency to suppress the individual without adequate cause is bad. Some High Courts have criticised governmental action in regard to detention and many people have been freed under the writ of habeas corpus. In some provinces it has been made difficult by ordinance for habeas

corpus applications to be made ¹¹ I have no doubt that the provincial governments have taken action after the fullest consideration of the situation but I should like to point out to them that the reputation of India as a champion of freedom is suffering somewhat because of these happenings

19 We have been asked about the coming 15th of August how should we celebrate that day Our Cabinet considered this matter and they were generally of opinion that both because of the serious situation in the country and Mahatma Gandhi's death it would not be proper to have any lavish celebrations or for any money to be spent on illuminations and the like There should however be an appropriate and modest celebration of the day The day happens to be a Sunday We do not propose to have a holiday on the Monday following

20 Celebrations will be official as well as non official So far as the latter are concerned no doubt the Congress President will issue instructions probably suggesting a public meeting etc In Delhi we propose to have an official celebration including a party by the Governor General to the diplomatic corps and others a flag hoisting ceremony on the Red Fort and a military parade I understand that the army authorities have directed that a military parade should be held on that day at important centres where our troops are situated

21 We have limited the use of the national flag On the 15th August however this limitation will not apply and any one can use that flag on his house or shop

22 A matter for you to consider is whether on the 15th August there should not be a release of prisoners that is those who you feel can be released That would be a good gesture for the New Year of independence which would be appreciated

11 For example in Madras and in West Bengal

23 You will have noticed in the press the violent attacks made by the Pakistan Government and officials on Lord Mountbatten ¹² He is made guilty of all the blood that was shed in the Punjab last year because he did not take action against the Sikh leaders early in August last. This charge is a most fantastic and monstrous one. Pakistan does not scruple to say or do anything regardless of truth or fairness if she thinks it suits her purpose. I think in this particular matter they have over-reached themselves and injured their own cause. Lord Mountbatten, of course, has nothing to do with all this and it is just absurd to drag him in in this way. But the whole basis of the argument has been that the Sikhs were the original sinners and nothing would have happened but for the Sikhs. I think this is an exceedingly unfair and false approach to the problem. You know how the situation developed in the Punjab from March 1947 when trouble broke out in Multan and Rawalpindi. You also know how during subsequent months there was continued killing and arson in Lahore and Amritsar. However, I shall not repeat this story except to point out that the charge made by Pakistan is grossly unfair. Our Government had thought of saying something about it in public but we decided not to do so as the U.K. Government had already issued some kind of a contradiction ¹³

12 Pakistan's Finance Minister, Ghulam Muhammed, said at London on 5 July 1948 that almost the whole blame for the Punjab riots rested on the shoulders of Lord Mountbatten for his failure to take necessary preemptive action against the Sikhs and the R.S.S. even though he had prior C.I.D. information about their conspiracy to throttle Pakistan by eliminating the Muslim population. He also blamed Mountbatten for forcing the pace of partition and thought that the ambition to become the common Governor-General of India and Pakistan was an obsession with him.

13 The Commonwealth Relations Office stated on 6 July that Mountbatten's actions in the Punjab were based on the advice and discussion he had with the Governor of the Punjab who was constitutionally responsible for Punjab's security and who based his advice on the assessment made and views expressed by the officers of the Punjab. Mountbatten's actions were also said to have had the sanction of the British Government. The decision regarding partition was said to have been taken with the full approval of the British Government and after closest consultations with the leaders of the two Dominions.

24 I find that our Ambassadors abroad are sometimes criticised. This puts me in a difficult position. They cannot reply and it is not easy for me to say much about their work. Much of it is necessarily not public work in the sense of being given publicity. We are building up our foreign service and it has always been a difficult matter to build up such a service. Some of the biggest countries in the world are yet rather backward in their foreign service because of the lack of traditions and experience behind that service. I think I can say that in the course of the last year or so we have done rather well in building this service up and some of our Ambassadors and Ministers have functioned effectively and done good service to India. We live in critical times and the lot of our Ambassadors abroad is not an easy one. It is his business to be on friendly terms with the nation to which he is accredited, to raise India's prestige there, to gain benefits for India where he can, and at the same time, firmly to adhere to India's general policy. That policy, I repeat, is a policy of not aligning with any power group but of being friends with all countries as far as possible. I am convinced that there is no other possible policy for us either in the present or in the foreseeable future.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
3 August 1948

My dear Premier

The last fortnight has seen many developments both in India and abroad which are of grave consequence. Abroad the situation in Berlin is still full of danger though there has been some slight relaxation. The approach of the Western powers to Stalin¹ may well lead to some temporary arrangement². Even if such an arrangement takes place it is hardly likely to take any permanency but it will certainly stave off fear of war in the near future. The principal reason however for thinking that there will be no war this year at least is the real disinclination of either of the two major parties to launch into war. But speeches continue to be made which are bellicose and sometimes events take the reins into their hands.

2 The Palestine situation is relatively static³. Recent events

1 Joseph V. Stalin (1879-1953) Secretary General of the Communist Party 1922-53. Premier of the U.S.S.R. 1941-53.

2 Representatives of the United States, Britain and France were in consultation with the Soviet leader from 29 July till the end of August 1948.

3 Between 8 and 18 July 1948 Israel improved its military position by acquiring complete control of areas as demarcated in the U.N. resolution on the partition of Palestine and by substantial territorial gains in areas under Arab control. From 18 July Count Bernadotte, the U.N. mediator in Palestine, pressed upon the Arabs and on Israel the acceptance of his proposals of 4 July for a final solution of the problem of Palestine. Bernadotte's plan provided for a union of Palestine and Transjordan divided into autonomous Jewish and Arab states, the Jews to give up a part of South Palestine including Nageb in exchange for West Galilee in the north and Jewish immigration to be subjected to U.N. control.

have probably been somewhat in favour of the Jews, and the Arabs are angry. They feel that the great powers, including the United Kingdom, have not given them a square deal. In the Arab and the Islamic world, and generally in the Middle East, there appear to be two rather contradictory tendencies at work. There is undoubtedly a certain pan Islamic tendency drawing the Islamic countries of the Middle East towards each other. At the same time there is a completely different tendency which may be said to be pro Asian as against Europe and America. That is to say there is a feeling that Europe and America have consistently tried to profit by the internal troubles of Middle Eastern countries and have exploited them. Therefore, they must give up all hope of relying on Europe or America and trust Asian countries. This latter tendency bases itself more on nationalism just as the former bases itself on religion. The nationalistic tendency is more confined to the intellectuals who can see a little further. They try to play down to a certain extent Islamic sentiment as such because they realise that while it is the cementing factor for certain Islamic countries it comes in the way of a larger cooperation with other Asian countries.

3 In India the three dominating issues continue to be Kashmir, Hyderabad and our economic difficulties. In all three of these there have been marked developments.

4 In Kashmir, the military situation took a turn for the worse for us because very large forces of the Pakistani regular army were thrown against our forces in the state. It is estimated that at least one full division of the Pakistan army is functioning in Kashmir now, apart from the irregulars, frontier scouts, tribal folk, etc. A full division with all modern equipment, fighting near its base, naturally made a great difference, and came in the way of the development of our plans. Pakistan organised an all out attack on many fronts. The fiercest attack took place in the Uri Tithwal sector, in the Jhelum valley. In the Jammu area and in Ladakh, there was also continued fighting. In the Tithwal area, our forces had to retreat a few miles. It must

be remembered that a large scale offensive of this type must have taken long weeks of preparation. Nevertheless it was held with such resources as we had at the time. Some reinforcements have been sent subsequently. Just at the present moment the Kashmir situation must be considered to be rather static but we do not intend to allow it to remain so.

5 The U N Kashmir Commission after spending three weeks in Delhi have now gone to Karachi. Their discussions with us centred round the ceasefire which later would be followed by further talks for a settlement. We were agreeable to a ceasefire but on two basic conditions. One was that the complicity of Pakistan must be recognised and stated, the other was that all Pakistan regular armies should completely withdraw from the state territory. Presumably Pakistan would not agree to these and hence matters came to a standstill. There is no doubt that the U N Commission knew that Pakistan armies were functioning in Kashmir. This meant that the whole case of Pakistan which was based on Pakistan not taking part in Kashmir operations was based on falsehood. The U N Commission appears to recognise this fact, indeed there was no help for it. Nevertheless they were reluctant to say so in public because they felt that this would not lead to a settlement which could only take place by agreement of the two parties. On our side we laid the greatest stress on this not only moral but factual issue. It seemed to us scandalous that patent facts should be denied and the whole case built up on that denial. The Security Council went completely wrong because it proceeded on wrong premises. We insisted therefore that the first step should be to right this wrong approach. The U N Commission are now, as I have said, in Karachi, presumably discussing possibilities of a ceasefire. Probably some of them will come back here soon for further discussions.

6 Meanwhile one important development has taken place. It appears that the Pakistan Government have openly admitted now that their armies are functioning in Kashmir state.

territory⁴ They have given rather futile reasons for this, but the fact remains that admittedly now the Indian army is fighting the Pakistan army in Kashmir territory, that is, India and Pakistan are at war, which is formally undeclared, in the Kashmir state. It is clear that this kind of situation cannot continue and rapid developments may well take place. We can hardly be at war with each other in one area, and at peace, carrying on inter dominion conferences and the like, in other areas.

7 It must be remembered that the Pakistan Army has a very large number of British officers. The whole General Staff is British controlled. If the Pakistan Army is functioning in Kashmir, it naturally follows that the British General Staff as well as other British officers in the Pakistan Army are conducting operations and are responsible for them. This raises serious issues and we have drawn the attention of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to this very anomalous state of affairs. In another context, the U K Prime Minister agreed that British officers could not stay on in either army if there was possibility of war⁵.

8 In Hyderabad, the situation grows more difficult, internally, from every point of view. There was a very serious incident near the Sholapur border on the way to Barsi enclave. A convoy of ours was suddenly attacked by a band of Razakars and some of our soldiers were killed. Our troops went into action and cleared the place of all Razakars, killing a

4 In a statement published in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of 1 August 1948 Pakistan said that the U N Commission had been informed that troops were sent in May 1948 in self defence to assist the 'Azad Kashmir forces and to keep the Indian forces away from their borders.

5 Reacting to Nehru's fears that Pakistan may use its air force against Indian forces in Kashmir the British Prime Minister informed the Pakistan Government that in the event of an open conflict in the sub continent the British Government would withdraw all British officers from there.

considerable number of them.⁶ Since then our troops have been in possession of this bit of the Nizam's territory, and we intend to hold on in spite of the protests we have received from the Nizam's Government. A joint commission of enquiry, consisting of an Indian Brigadier from our Army, and a British Colonel serving with the Nizam, conducted an enquiry into this incident and jointly reported that it was an organised well prepared attack by the Razakars on the Indian troops.

9 Petty incidents continue to happen on the Hyderabad border but what is much worse is the activities of the Razakars and others like them within the Hyderabad state. Recently, a Minister of the Nizam's present government Mr Joshi, who has been till now a close colleague of Kasim Razvi of the Ittehad ul Muslemeen, resigned from the government and made a public statement.⁷ This statement discloses a terrible state of affairs in parts of the Hyderabad state. There is no doubt that large sections of the non Muslims in Hyderabad are being terrorised in every way. Apart from killing, arson and rape there are forcible conversions and forcible collection of money by the Razakars.

10 It appears that the increase of disorder in Hyderabad state is having a bad effect on the Nizam's army. This army has a large number of senior British officers. These officers have been somewhat alarmed by the recent speech made by Mr Attlee the U.K. Prime Minister in the House of Commons in answer to Mr Churchill.⁸ They have suddenly realised that

6 In an action by the Indian troops at Nanaj, a village in Hyderabad state about 38 Razakars were killed.

7 J. V. Joshi, the Commerce Minister in Hyderabad state, resigned on 23 July 1948 as a protest against the Razakar atrocities against the Hindus.

8 Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965). Served in army in India 1895. Chancellor of Exchequer 1924-29. Prime Minister 1940-45 and 1951-55. In the debate in the House of Commons on 30 July 1948, responding to Churchill's criticism that India had violated the Standstill Agreement with Hyderabad and threatened military action against it, Attlee said that it was for India to decide what action to take as the British Crown's obligations towards the states had terminated with the cessation of British rule.

in case of hostility with India if they continue to serve the Nizam they would put themselves in a very difficult position with their own government. There are thus internally weakening factors in Hyderabad. The economic blockade continues but it must be remembered that we are not stopping the sending of medical supplies, salt or chlorine for purifying water. Of food there is no lack in Hyderabad as it is an exporting country. The propaganda that is being carried on that we are starving Hyderabad and denying it medical supplies is completely false. As a matter of fact we are sending a large quantity of cholera vaccine now.

11 What are we going to do about Hyderabad is a question that is frequently asked. I can well understand the impatience and irritation in the country. The way the Nizam's government and the Razakars have behaved has been scandalous. We have made it clear that not only the old formula is dead and gone but also that we are not going to talk even unless the present government there is changed and the Razakars are banned and suppressed. Recently Sir Mirza Ismail⁹ came to Delhi and it was reported in the press that he was carrying on negotiations on behalf of Hyderabad. This was not strictly true. Sir Mirza is an old colleague whom we respect and we are always prepared to meet him. In effect however there can be no serious talk with him because he had no authority.

12 To come back to the question what are we going to do with Hyderabad. You will not expect me to answer that in this letter. All that we can say is that while we do not wish to take any precipitate action and must go forward warily and in full knowledge of all the consequences of any contemplated action we cannot refrain from action either for very long. Some action is already taking place economic and other and this is producing results in spite of the brave words of some members.

⁹ (1883-1959) Dewan of Mysore 1926-1941 Dewan of Jaipur 1942-1946 President Nizam's Executive Council 1946-48

of the Hyderabad government Further action will undoubtedly be taken unless something happens which changes the situation in Hyderabad But it must be remembered that every step has to be viewed in the all India context No government can forget the whole picture of India in considering one particular part of it In no event can we admit the right of Hyderabad to independence There is no instance in history so far as I am aware when a land locked territory surrounded on all sides by one State has become independent Both in strict law and in fact the notion of Hyderabad's independence is a little absurd

13 In recent weeks a great deal of attention has been attracted to the gun running between Karachi and Hyderabad Four engine Lancaster planes worked by foreign pilots have been continuously flying at night to deliver their cargo of arms etc to Hyderabad We have asked them not to do so and indeed according to our rules no aircraft can fly over India without stopping on Indian soil We are certainly entitled to shoot them down and we shall do so but it is not easy to locate a plane flying at night at about 15 to 20 thousand feet altitude Yesterday an accident happened at Mauripur airfield near Karachi when one of these Lancastrians had a crash soon after taking off The pilot died and the plane was *smashed off* The most revealing fact of all was the *ammunition* and arms spread out all over the airfield after this crash This matter also raises important issues for us vis a vis Pakistan We are in constant communication with the U K Government on these subjects and of course with the Pakistan Government to which formal protests have been addressed

14 In view of this Kashmir Hyderabad and Pakistan situation it is clear that we cannot allow ourselves to be tied up in secondary matters when at any moment a very grave crisis may confront us I would request provincial governments to keep this picture before their eyes and to be mentally and otherwise prepared for any possible development It is well

known that we are not war mongers and we are more devoted to peace than any other country or people. We shall avoid war because war is a frightful thing and comes in the way of progress and leaves bitter trails behind it. But events follow one another in quick succession and our patience is tried to the utmost.

15 The economic situation shows no sign of improvement and the whole question of controls among other things has come up for reconsideration. So far as the cotton textile policy is concerned control has for all practical purposes been reimposed.¹⁰ We must confess that we took a wrong step when we removed this control or at any rate we took it in a wrong manner and the results have been very harmful. While a small number of people manufacturers and dealers in cotton textiles have made money vast numbers of others have been hard hit. When disparities in income increase in any way there is inevitable trouble. All legislation and financial policy has to aim today at removing these disparities as far as possible and gradually working towards a common level of income or at any rate incomes which do not differ too much. The removal of controls has worked the other way and apart from hitting hard both the middle classes and the poorer classes they have introduced a psychology of extreme dissatisfaction in the people. It has been felt that various sections of the community do not shoulder burdens equally.

16 This reimposition of control on textiles casts a heavy burden on the provinces. Its success depends upon the efficient enforcement of it there and the proper selection of wholesalers and retailers. It is essential that cases of infringement of control are tried expeditiously and offenders severely punished. Leniency in this matter instead of proving a deterrent actually encourages violation of the law.

¹⁰ The new policy was announced on 30 July 1948. See *enir* p. 135.

17 The steep rise in the price level has hit particularly hard the people with fixed incomes such as government servants employees in trade industrial labour etc The consumers cooperative societies to meet the requirements of these people particularly should be encouraged It is also desirable to restrict the sales from government controlled shops to people belonging to certain specific income groups Supplies to these people should be on the basis of coupons to be issued by government

18 This control on textiles is only a small part of the economic problem which faces us I shall not write more about this here except to say that it will require all our wisdom and energy to deal with this matter We may point out a number of factors which have gone to worsen the economic situation and we may be right but the causes are deep seated and therefore the remedies must fit in with them

19 The problems of the refugees from Pakistan still pursue us and I fear that progress continues to be very slow Recent changes in policy have rather upset these refugees and there are plenty of anti social elements among them to take advantage of this fact It is clear that the problem cannot be solved unless the whole of India cooperates At the recent Premiers Conference¹¹ held in Delhi there was evidence of this desire to cooperate

20 *Housing has been a terrible headache in all the provinces* It was bad enough because of the war but the influx of refugees has made it infinitely worse As I wrote to you in my previous letter we have decided to start a factory for the manufacture of pre fabricated houses We are opening a new Department of Housing and putting it under the Health Minister I commend to you the opening of similar departments of housing in each province

11 On 19 July 1949

21 I have written to you often enough on the subject of detenus or people kept in prison or detention without trial. Circumstances may compel us to do this and circumstances in India today are bad and we will not take a risk which may lead to violent repercussions. Subject to this I would again ask you to consider how far it is desirable to keep people for long in detention without trial. This has a bad effect on our reputation and I continue to receive large numbers of protests from every part of the world. I cannot advise you because the responsibility is yours and you have to judge finally. I only wish to point out to you the dangers of continuing a policy which ultimately probably depends on the judgement of police officers or the like and which tends to become stabilised as a method of government. It must always be remembered that this is not a normal or proper method of government or administration and that it can only be indulged in in cases of grave emergency. It is true that there is emergency in India today. I would suggest to you what indeed some provinces have done that a panel of senior judicial officers preferably High Court judges might be asked to examine privately all cases of detention and to advise government what action to take in regard to them. It is obviously something that does not redound to the credit of government that High Courts should pass strictures on government when such matters are brought before them.

22 Long ago it was decided to exchange prisoners between Western Pakistan and certain parts of India but many hitches occurred and delayed this transfer. Now we hope to carry this through as expeditiously as possible.

23 The Government of India have decided to send a delegation to the second session of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade as well as to the Interim Commission of the International Trade Organisation. These commence at Geneva on the 16th and 25th August.

respectively. The leader of the Indian delegation will be Shri Raghavan Pillai ¹² *Charge' d Affaires of India Paris*

24 You will be glad to know that the Government of India have agreed to enter into a treaty of friendship with the ancient republic of Switzerland ¹³ This is our first treaty of this kind

25 I have already written to you about the celebrations on the 15th of August. It is for the provinces to decide the manner of such celebrations but our advice is that they should be not on a lavish scale and that no large sums should be spent upon them. That would be unbecoming in any event in view of the distress in the country. Mahatma Gandhi's death is too near us for us to take part in any celebrations. The day must be treated by us *not in any spirit of vain glory but rather in a spirit of dedication to the cause we have served for so long and which demands fresh and continuous service from us still*

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12 (b 1898) Joined Indian Civil Service 1921 Secretary General in Ministry of External Affairs 1952-60

13 The treaty signed on 14 August 1948 at New Delhi for perpetual peace and unalterable friendship provided for exchange of diplomatic representatives between the two countries respect for each other's nationals rights of residence trade profession and movement privileges on the most favoured foreign nation basis and settlement of all disputes through negotiations

New Delhi
16 August 1948

My dear Premier

I write to you the day after our celebration of Independence Day. It would be fitting on this occasion to review the work of the past year—our successes and our failures—but that would be too large an undertaking for this fortnightly letter. Our celebrations of Independence Day, quiet as they were planned to be, were successful and I think they indicated that in spite of our difficulties there was an appreciation in the mind of the general public of the achievements of the year.

2 In the many messages from prominent leaders that were published or broadcast, there was one common theme: that without self-praise or self-pity, we should dedicate ourselves anew to the service of India and her people. It was a right note. Self-praise is bad, but self-pity is equally foolish. We have to take a dispassionate view of the situation and face it with all our faith and courage. There is no doubt that the problems we face are most difficult; there is also no doubt that we are going forward, step by step, towards the solution of some of these problems. It may be that while we solve one problem, another takes its place, but that is the way of life and the way of dynamic growth.

3 The situation in Berlin is somewhat easier and it seems likely that some arrangement will be arrived at between the rival powers. How far that arrangement will take us and how long it will last is another matter. In a little more than a month

the United Nations General Assembly is meeting in Paris¹ and all these international problems are going to come up before it India not only because of her independent nationhood but also because of her potential power in world affairs, becomes more and more entangled in these international problems We cannot isolate ourselves and remain aloof or refuse to express an opinion As members of an international body, we have to shoulder the burden and obligation of that membership So the Paris General Assembly of the U N will be an important one, possibly having far reaching results

4 In view of this I have been earnestly thinking of visiting this Assembly session myself if only for a few days at the beginning² If it is at all possible I shall go there Whether it is possible or not subsequent events will indicate

5 There is also the probability of my going to the Premiers Conference in London³ This is likely to be held in the second week of October Normally I would go for the General Assembly and stay on till the Premiers Conference If I cannot be away from India for this period I may come back after the first meeting and then go again for the second⁴

6 Before you get this letter you will have learnt of the resignation of our Finance Minister, Shri Shanmukham Chetty and of our acceptance of it⁵ I made it clear that there

1 The U N General Assembly met at Paris from 21 September to 12 December 1948

2 Nehru addressed the General Assembly on 3 November 1948

3 Nehru attended the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference at London from 11 to 22 October 1948

4 In fact leaving New Delhi on 6 October Nehru returned on 5 November 1948

5 Shanmukham Chetty resigned on 16 August 1948 as a sequel to the strong exception taken in Parliament to the Government's withdrawal of income tax cases against some industrialists while the question of vesting such authority with Government was still under consideration of the Select Committee of the Constituent Assembly

is no question of our doubting the *bona fides* of Shri Shanmukham Chetty. Nevertheless, some things were done which can only be described as a grave error of judgement. In such matters, we have felt that we must have the highest standard of public conduct and so I have agreed with deep regret to accept his resignation. I trust that this occurrence will help both our provincial ministries and the general public in realising that in public affairs only the highest standards must be maintained, and that even *bona fide* errors cannot be tolerated.

7 This resignation has come at a very awkward time for us and just when we were dealing with the economic situation. The Finance Minister himself was in charge of two important legislative measures, the nationalization of the Reserve Bank of India⁶ and the Banking Bill.⁷ But more important than any particular legislative measure is the problem of how to deal effectively with the economic situation as a whole. In this matter, we are at present trying to consult important interests and experts.⁸ I am glad to inform you that we are consulting even those who are normally completely opposed to Government. We do not wish to proceed in this and other matters on a narrow party basis.⁹ Even if we are right in our policy but fail to win over large sections, our rightness will not take us very far. I would commend to you this example of attempting to win the cooperation of others. In regard to the economic situation, there are two general approaches: (1) that very radical measures are necessary immediately, and (2) that

6 The Reserve Bank (Transfer of Public Ownership) Bill introduced on 9 August was passed by the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) on 3 September and became an Act with effect from 1 January 1949.

7 The Bill aimed at defining a banking company and increasing the control and powers of the Reserve Bank of India. As the Bill could not be passed during the autumn session of the Assembly, an ordinance giving immediate effect to its provisions was promulgated on 18 September 1948.

8 The Government invited leading economists, industrialists and labour leaders to discuss and suggest measures to control inflation and improve the economy.

9 For instance, Jayaprakash Narayan was among those who were invited

just at this present moment it would be undesirable to embark on even desirable radical measures. It may be that some balance has to be struck between these two viewpoints.

8 Recently there has been much criticism of certain legislative measures in a province which tend to deprive High Courts of their normal powers.¹⁰ Sometimes, ordinances are issued and at other times, the provincial assembly deals with the matter. I have written to you on several occasions about the growing tendency to restrict individual and group freedom. In a crisis much can be said in justification of this, and we live in days of crisis. Nevertheless it is a dangerous path to tread and governments get used to very special measures which they cannot do without later. For us, with our past record in regard to civil liberty this is a peculiarly distasteful course.

9 In any event, any attempt to limit the powers of a High Court or to prevent it from judging executive action in the normal way is fraught with grave consequences. The judiciary are supposed to be the defenders of freedom within the law. If they cannot even do this then one of their chief functions vanishes. The reputation of High Courts, which has been high, suffers. I would therefore earnestly request you to keep this in mind and not to interfere with the High Court's discretion or to put too many restrictions on individual freedom.

10 This is particularly applicable to habeas corpus applications and to the freedom of association in trade unions.

¹⁰ An ordinance was promulgated in Madras on 25 May 1948 giving extensive powers of detention to the Madras Government and restricting the jurisdiction of the Madras High Court to entertain writs of habeas corpus. On 30 July the Madras High Court while upholding the main provisions of the ordinance overruled any restriction on its jurisdiction to entertain writ petitions. The Bill replacing the ordinance as passed by the Madras Legislature on 11 August also deleted this clause. Nehru wrote to the Madras Premier on 10 August that it is better for some mischief makers to be free than for the whole government to be condemned by moderate and reasonable people.

etc. In many countries in the world today there are labour or semi labour governments. For them it is a creed that trade unions must have freedom. Anything that lessens it therefore is objected to by them. I continue to receive from foreign countries and especially from trade unions in foreign countries letters and telegrams of protest expressing their surprise and dismay at some things that our Government have done.

11 So far as High Courts are concerned we have been advised by high judicial authority that even if an ordinance or other kind of legislation comes in the way of a High Court issuing the writ of habeas corpus the right of the High Courts will not be affected in this regard. Our Draft Constitution expressly preserves this right of the High Courts.¹¹ We have, therefore, officially advised provincial governments that it is undesirable to oust the jurisdiction of High Courts in habeas corpus applications under the Public Safety Act.¹²

12 While we cannot go far in suppressing activities even those considered objectionable there is no doubt that in existing circumstances we have to take every precaution against the revival of anti social elements. Reports have come to us from many parts of India that the activities of the R S S are again growing. The R S S method is often to speak softly but their whole ideology and activity is different and opposed to the ideology which has governed us for so long. We cannot therefore so long as we are the Government tolerate the encouragement and spread of this wrong ideology. I hope that provincial governments are wide awake in this respect and will not permit the spread of communal doctrines in whatever shape.

11 Article 226 of the Constitution gives this right to every High Court.

12 The provincial governments were told that consistent with the spirit of the Draft Constitution and as a matter of policy it would be inadvisable to restrict the jurisdiction of the High Courts in habeas corpus applications.

13 I might mention that it has come to my notice that the R S S are now functioning in various guises even as civil liberty unions or *Jana Adhikar Sabhas*. We must not be led astray by these names but should find out the content behind them.

14 There are also reports of a certain revival on a smaller scale of some pro Muslim League feeling in India. I was surprised to find this as far away as Madras. That also we cannot encourage in any way.

15 Our neighbour country Burma is in the throes of a very serious rebellion and it is doubtful what the outcome of this rebellion will be.¹³ We are deeply interested in this not only because any change in Burma affects the whole position in South East Asia but also because of the large number of Indians in Burma. We shall help them of course to the best of our ability but we have found from experience that it is little that we can give where such large numbers are involved. Any attempt to bring them over to India is a colossal task and if we bring large numbers to India and add them to our refugee population how would it profit them and us. We have advised Indian residents in Burma to remain there and to help each other—at the same time not entangling themselves in the internal affairs of Burma.

16 In Malaya there has also been a serious rebellion but in view of the superior striking power of the British Government there this revolt is likely to be suppressed.¹⁴

13 In August a few army units near Rangoon and in Central Burma mutinied and joined the rebel forces. There was also an attempt to overthrow the Central Government.

14 Emergency was declared on 17 June 1948 in the Federation of Malaya to check communist terrorism. On 23 July the Malayan Communist Party and other groups associated with the rebellion were declared unlawful and on 3 August it was claimed that the communist intention to proclaim a Soviet Republic of Malaya had been frustrated with the help of armed reinforcements from Hong Kong and Britain.

17 We have started an Atomic Energy Commission¹⁵ This will be directly under the Prime Minister Most people connect atomic energy with the atomic bomb As a matter of fact we are hardly likely to be able to make such bombs for a long time to come and I trust that India will never use such a bomb which brings such misery to vast numbers of people The real importance of atomic energy is that it brings a new and powerful force into daily life This force by itself is of revolutionary social consequences it is likely to change the structure of life as it is today it brings tremendous power which can be carried from place to place easily and can be used for raising the productive and other resources of the country

18 You have been informed of the decision of the Cabinet here that all women whether married unmarried or widows should be eligible to apply for appointment to all branches of public services¹⁶ It will of course be in your discretion to employ them where they can be most useful I am glad of this decision of the Government of India because it is in conformity with Congress policy during the last 20 years at least

19 The situation in Kashmir has not been satisfactory While we have been waiting for the U N Commission to take some definite steps Pakistan has been trying to force the pace and has used very large numbers of its regular army with this end in view That is a very serious matter with far reaching consequences We have taken the strongest exception to Pakistan armies functioning in Kashmir

20 The U N Kashmir Commission is here at present and has given us a resolution which deals with ceasefire first and then a

15 The Atomic Energy Commission was set up on 9 August 1948 with Homi Bhabha as chairman and K S Krishnan and S S Bhatnagar as member and member secretary respectively The Commission was to ensure protection of the country's interests in regard to development of atomic energy locate areas where useful minerals could be found and promote research

16 The decision of the Cabinet was announced on 4 August 1948

truce and then later other necessary arrangements. We are considering this carefully. In view however of Pakistan Government's complicity in this matter and their continuing denial of such complicity it is impossible for us to trust their word.

21 Hyderabad continues to deteriorate and we receive letters not only from the Hindu population but from the Europeans there painting a picture of conditions which is very peculiar. Our grip on the Hyderabad frontiers is strong now and our instructions are that if any one misbehaves near the border our army or police should immediately cross that border and take action. The White Paper on Hyderabad has recently been issued.¹⁷ This will help you to understand the background.

22 The Agent General for Hyderabad Nawab Zain Yar Jung has been recalled by the Nizam presumably because he did not fall in line with the present Razakar Government. A new Agent General has come Mr S M A Razvi.¹⁸

23 The next few weeks should see major developments in Kashmir and Hyderabad. The present situation is far from static. The presence of the U N Commission is a restraining factor.

24 I started this letter two days ago but was unable to complete it. A very great deal of our time has been taken up by the Kashmir issue and more specially the proposals of the U N Commission in regard to it. These proposals have placed us in a peculiar difficulty. We are naturally anxious to do everything in our power to promote peace and a settlement and as a first step to this end to have ceasefire and a truce. But a ceasefire which leaves conditions as they are is going to lead to no

17 On 10 August 1948

18 He took over as the state's Agent General in Delhi on 6 August 1948

settlement The first condition is that the Pakistan regular forces and irregulars including the tribal people must withdraw from Kashmir state territory The second is that our own forces must remain there in adequate numbers to prevent any new raid or incursion from outside Many other factors have also to be borne in mind but the most important is the one I have mentioned above It is quite impossible for us to weaken our defence in Kashmir even if the Pakistanis withdraw because they have to withdraw only a short distance into their territory and can come back again with great rapidity We can take no risks of this kind The U N Commission have suggested certain governing principles Elucidation and the working out of these principles is left to a somewhat later stage We shall have to come to a decision on this subject very soon

25 Whatever the decisions in regard to Kashmir and Hyderabad may be provincial governments should keep wide awake about the possible reactions within their areas As I have mentioned above there appears to have been recrudescence of communal activity in various parts of India This has to be checked and prevented from doing any mischief whether it is Hindu or Muslim or Sikh Unfortunately some leaders of the Sikhs have been carrying on a most unwise policy and delivering intemperate speeches¹⁹ You will have noticed that the Hindu Mahasabha intends to embark again into politics²⁰ This is an undesirable move and has to be watched carefully As you know Government have decided not to encourage any communal

19 At a press conference on 2 August 1948 Master Tara Singh leader of the Akali Dal called for a Punjabi speaking state On 14 August he clarified that the demand did not mean a separate homeland for the Sikhs but a province where their religion culture and language could flourish

20 On 8 August 1948 the Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha resolved to resume political activity and offered membership to all Indian citizens irrespective of caste or religion

organisation²¹ That is to say that government or government officers whether in the Centre or in the provinces should have no dealings with the Hindu Mahasabha as such or any other body that is obviously communal whatever different garb it may wear

26 In a letter sent to me by a Premier of a province it has been suggested that Army units should be raised provincially and given provincial names² This is proposed because it is thought that it would lead to greater enthusiasm in the province concerned The Defence Ministry are entirely opposed to this proposal and have pointed out that it would disturb the present organisation of the Army I entirely agree with them We have enough provincialism as it is and we should not encourage it any more specially in the Army The Army should be a homogeneous Indian Army and not a collection of provincial armies It is highly important that any separatist tendencies whether communal or provincial should not be allowed to come into the Army Present recruitment is done on a zonal rather than a provincial basis It would be a great pity if we changed this and prevented people in the Army from developing an all India outlook

27 It has come to my notice that certain rather irresponsible newspapers and periodicals are continually attacking many of the Ambassadors and Ministers that we have sent abroad Any discussion of policy is of course always to be welcomed Indeed any criticism which is *bona fide* should have full play But the kind of fantastic and rather personal charges that are made distress me because the person so charged can make no reply and it is difficult for me to contradict such statements from day

21 The Government of India advised the provincial governments on 11 August 1948 to take action against communal organisations engaged in other than *bona fide* religious cultural social and educational activities

22 This was proposed by Ravi Shankar Shukla Premier of the Central Provinces and Berar on 11 July 1948

to day To do so is to give a certain importance to the newspaper or periodical concerned Most of these charges and stories are completely false or are perverted It is my belief that the building up of our foreign establishments has been more of a success than we could have anticipated and most of our foreign representatives have done rather well

28 Inevitably much of their work does not see the light of day and so perhaps people imagine that they do no work It is a difficult matter to build up a foreign service and there are only very few countries which have succeeded in doing so adequately Our success in this matter seems to me to be marked Of course mistakes have been made and no doubt will continue to be made But on the whole I am prepared to congratulate our foreign representatives on the good work that they are doing

29 Criticisms are sometimes made of the large sums being spent on our foreign diplomatic establishments ²³ It is true that this is a costly business We have tried to prevent waste and I think on the whole we compare favourably in this respect with the embassies etc , of other countries The choice before us is either to have such diplomatic relations with foreign powers or not As an independent country especially because of our present status and potential for the future of India it is unthinkable to me that we can do away with these foreign embassies etc , however much they may cost We would hardly be functioning as an independent nation then and we would not be able to protect the interests in so far as we can of the large numbers of Indians abroad Inevitably we would have to rely on some other power to represent us in other countries as Pakistan is doing today in many countries That would not be in keeping not only with our dignity and status but also with any external policy that we may wish to pursue

23 Some newspaper reports were critical of the alleged purchase of expensive furniture for embassies at a time when the country was facing a crisis in foreign exchange

30 Embassies in foreign countries represent the State. They have to maintain a certain dignity and function in the normal diplomatic way. We have made some innovations which so far as we know no other country has done. Among these we have ruled out the use of alcoholic drinks at all our official functions and this is a saving apart from its moral aspect. Considering the previous practice all over the world this has been a fairly notable change.

31 Criticisms are also made of our general policy and it is said that by maintaining an independent foreign policy we make enemies all round and have no friends. That I think is a basic misunderstanding of the position. It is incorrect to say that we make enemies and have no friends. It would be correct to say that our refusal to be anybody's camp followers is not liked by some countries. Looking at it purely opportunistically I am sure that no other policy is likely to be advantageous to us even in short run and certainly in the long run. The fact that India counts in the world today far more than most people imagine is itself a reason why we have to come up against the policies of some other nations. I think that India is respected more and more in foreign chancelleries and what India says has weight.

32 You will have learnt of the appointment of His Highness the Maharaja of Bhavnagar²¹ as the next Governor of Madras in succession to Sir Archibald Nye. Sir Archibald Nye who is the last British Governor in India has been a great success there and it is with regret that both we in the Central Government and the Madras Government are parting from him. It is not a real parting as he will be coming back to India as the U.K. High Commissioner. His presence here in that capacity will be

welcome The appointment of the Maharaja of Bhavnagar is an innovation as this is the first occasion when we have appointed one of the princes to this high office

33 Recently the East Bengal Government has indulged in some aggression across their border with West Bengal They have occupied certain Char lands²⁵ about which there has been some dispute and which thus far have been included in West Bengal It is unfortunate that these acts of aggression continue We cannot submit to them and we have to take action to regain possession of these alluvial lands on the borders of Murshidabad district

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

25 The new alluvial land created by the receding flood waters at places where the rivers change their course during the rainy season

New Delhi
23 August 1948

My dear Premier *

For some weeks past I have been writing to you about the very serious economic situation resulting from inflation and continued rise in prices. In my fortnightly letters I have mentioned this and I have asked you for your views on the subject. Some Premiers have sent me notes on the subject.

2 You will realise that the Government of India have been peculiarly exercised over this matter as the responsibility is ultimately theirs and apart from this anything affecting vast numbers of people in India is of vital consequence. It is a possibility that unless the economic situation is grappled with effectively there may be continued deterioration and we might arrive at a pass from which it may be difficult to extricate ourselves. We have enough problems and troubles—Kashmir, Hyderabad, etc. and probably the basic problem of all is this economic situation.

3 The Government of India decided to confer with various important interests and experts before they came to any new conclusions. We consulted representatives of labour. We are consulting representatives of industry. We invited a number of prominent economists from all over the country and asked them to confer together and present us with their

recommendations¹ These economists came to Delhi for a week or so They sat together discussing this problem amongst them We did not give them any precise terms of reference We asked them to consider the present economic situation in the country and to suggest remedies The economists who came here represent differing schools of thought

4 Yesterday these economists met the members of the Cabinet and presented a report on the economic situation in India This report was a unanimous one It contains an analysis of the situation and of the major causes which had led to inflation and rise in prices Remedies were suggested under four heads (1) Fiscal (2) Monetary (3) Controls and (4) Production

5 The economists considered the situation as one of grave national emergency which required a war time outlook and a war time approach In fact they called it a war against inflation and for this they suggested remedial measures involving a simultaneous attack on a number of fronts Their plan they told us was to be looked at as a whole and not in bits and parts although of course the emphasis may vary or possibly some relatively non essential parts might not be considered important But they did lay emphasis on our considering their proposals as an integrated whole

6 These proposals involve far reaching changes in various aspects of our present day economy both central and provincial Essentially this plan is a short term one and is not meant to bring about permanent changes though obviously even a short term plan produces certain permanent results

¹ The economists consulted were K T Shah G N Vakil Gyan Chandra V K R V Rao E P W da Costa Radhakamal Mukherjee P J Thomas D R Gadgil and Narayan Rao They recommended reimposition of control on essential commodities reduced public expenditure graded taxation and vigorous public borrowings

The whole objective is to break the back of inflationary tendencies in the course of a few months or a year and then to review the situation and perhaps relax somewhat in some directions. The plan therefore must be considered roughly as a year's programme or may be a little more than a year. During this period everything or almost everything has to be subordinated to the fight against inflation and its attendant evils. This involves our stopping expenditure on every project and activity which does not yield immediate results or which does not help in the fight against inflation. That is to say even the beneficent schemes are to be held up.

7 I need not describe their proposals here as I am enclosing a full copy of their report for your consideration.² You will notice that provincial governments are affected by many of the proposals and it will be for you to consider how far you can go. But in any event in view of the present situation and the probable steps that the Government of India may take it would appear to be clear that reliance must not be placed by provincial governments on the Government of India for grants of loans except for very urgent and unavoidable reasons. This will affect many of your schemes and policies.

8 Two important matters which provincial governments have before them are prohibition and acquisition of zamindaris. Both of these are essential parts of the Congress programme both involve large expenditures by way of compensation or otherwise. It is for the provincial governments to consider how far they can go ahead with these in the immediate future. But in giving this consideration they might bear in mind that the Centre will not be able to give any effective help.

9 This is a hard thing for me to say after all the promises we have made to provincial governments but we have to be realists.

² Not printed

and realism requires a frank facing of the issues before us and a *grappling with them with all our might*. I am afraid we have rather slurred over these matters and allowed them to drift. There can be no excuse for that any more

10 The Government of India have not considered the report yet and therefore have come to no conclusions. They will *consider it fully and exhaustively very soon as the matter can brook no delay*. What their conclusions are going to be I cannot prophesy. Normally, we should have waited for full provincial reactions and your opinions before arriving at any final conclusions. But the time at our disposal is short and we may have to come to some conclusions even before we hear from you fully unless you write to us soon. It is obvious that a unanimous report of eminent economists from all over the country must be treated with respect. Economists, however eminent in their domain, *need not necessarily be acquainted with the practical and administrative aspects of the problem*. That is for us to consider

11 As you are aware, the Central Assembly is meeting at present. Normally, the present session would end on the 4th September. *It would be desirable from every point of view to place some of the major indications of Government's future policy before the Assembly for discussion before the Assembly breaks up*. It may not perhaps be easy to arrive at final *conclusions by then either for the Government or the Assembly*. But some general indication will have to be given. The Assembly may meet for this purpose early in September. We may have to extend the session by two or three days, if necessary

12 I also enclose herewith a copy of the report on this very subject submitted to the Government by the economists attached to the various Ministries of the Government of India

13 I shall be grateful to you if you will give earnest and immediate thought to this matter and to the report I am sending to you. If you could let me have your preliminary reactions as soon as possible it would help very much. Fuller reactions might be sent a little later.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 September, 1948

My dear Premier

The last fortnight has been one of important developments and *we are on the eve of far reaching decisions*

2 The international situation has not undergone any marked change except that there appears to be every prospect of some kind of an agreement between the Four Powers in regard to the Berlin deadlock ¹ Probably the Russian blockade from the western part of Berlin will be removed and at the same time the new Russian mark will be the sole currency used in the whole of Berlin This probable settlement will *remove one cause of grave tension in Europe* but the essential causes of conflict are not resolved in this way and no doubt friction will continue ²

3 The situation in Burma has not changed greatly though *there might be said to be a slight improvement from the point of view of the Burmese Government* In Malaya, the strength of the rebellion is evidenced by the fact that more and more armed forces and aircraft are being needed to suppress it It has been said by the British authorities that it will take a long time to liquidate this rebellion Although the rebellion may be

Communist inspired it could not have assumed such large proportions unless there was a great deal of discontent and economic distress. It is strange that while every effort is being made to suppress the rebellion by force little attention is paid to the economic aspect.

4 The whole of South East Asia is in turmoil yet some of the major Western powers who have interests there have not quite realised that radical changes political and economic have become essential. In Indonesia the Dutch Government continues to function and to think in the old colonial way.³ It is obvious that this can only lead to strife and can never offer a solution. The Indonesian Republic has faced very great difficulties and dangers with courage. Those dangers continue.⁴ But there is beginning to be a realisation in the minds of some of the great powers that this treatment of Indonesia may lead to a general worsening of the South East Asia situation and that a more sensible approach is needed.⁵ In

3 Though the Dutch and the Republicans had agreed in January 1948 to observe a truce the Dutch began to set up autonomous states by holding plebiscites in areas held by them earlier. The Republicans protested and did not join the provisional government of the United States of Indonesia set up by the Dutch as the position of the Republic in the proposed federation was not defined.

4 The Dutch imposition of a trade embargo to check arms traffic led to inflation food shortages and the neglect of plantations in the areas held by the Republicans. They also faced a political crisis after the Communist withdrawal of support to the government in January 1948.

5 The American and the Australian members of the Good Offices Committee of the Security Council proposed on 10 June 1948 that a Constituent Assembly be elected to fix the state boundaries draft a Constitution for the United States of Indonesia and form a federal government. The proposal acceptable to the Republicans was rejected by the Dutch Government.

Indo China the same old colonial outlook has prevailed thus far⁶

5 I should like to make it perfectly clear that both in Burma and Malaya there has been no question of Indian troops functioning. We have no desire to interfere. The question arose before us of the possibility of Indians requiring protection. Fortunately there is no anti Indian feeling in either of those countries and we came to the conclusion that no special measures of protection were necessary. Indeed any attempt to take such measures might have a bad effect and create an anti Indian feeling. Although we are not interfering in any way in either of these places, I might inform you that we have permitted the Burmese Government to purchase some arms and ammunition in India.

6 In view of the grave problems facing us in India I had decided not to go to Europe in September as I had previously hoped to do. I intend still to attend the Dominion Premiers Conference in London on the 11th October. I might therefore go to England early in October and visit Paris also for a few days for the U N General Assembly meeting.

7 In response to an appeal from Count Bernadotte⁷ the U N mediator in Palestine the Government of India have contributed Rs 100 000 for the relief of refugee sufferers. This

6 Indo-China comprising the five states of Laos, Cambodia, Annam, Tonkin and Cochinchina was a French colony from 1883. After the Japanese surrender in 1945 France regained control over Laos and Cambodia and gave them an autonomous status. The other three states passed under the control of Viet Minh whose head Ho Chi Minh organised opposition to French reoccupation and proclaimed an independent Republic of Vietnam. In December 1946 hostilities broke out between the French and the Viet Minh.

7 Count Folke Bernadotte (1895-1948) President of Swedish Red Cross 1946 appointed on 20 May 1948 by the Security Council as United Nations mediator in Palestine. Assassinated by Zionist terrorists on 11 September 1948.

is a token amount only and it is meant to be used without distinction of race. A great number of refugees are Arabs but some are Jews also. We are prepared to forward any other sums that may be contributed in this behalf.

8 On the 15th September the new Indian cruiser H M I S *Delhi* is due to arrive in Bombay.⁸ This is rather a special occasion from the point of view of our Navy and our Armed Forces. It means that our little Navy in a sense grows up. I intend going to Bombay to welcome this cruiser.

9 The negotiations for the exchange of prisoners between Pakistan and India have been completed and it is hoped that the actual exchange may take place some time fairly early in September.⁹

10 As you know our Finance Minister Shri Shanmukham Chetty resigned from his high and responsible office a short while ago.¹⁰ As I stated in the Assembly I do not think that Shri Chetty was guilty of anything more than a grave error of judgment. Nevertheless it became important for him to resign. While I regret the departure of an able colleague in this way I trust that this incident will indicate to all concerned that our desire is to maintain high standards in our public life. There is sometimes a tendency to slacken and to gloss over errors in the public interest. It is better not to do so even if individuals occasionally suffer. We have yet to develop the discipline of a free and democratic country.

11 Shri K C. Neogy has taken charge for the present of the Finance portfolio in addition to his own portfolio of Commerce.

⁸ H M I S *Delhi* formerly the British cruiser *Achilles* was acquired by the Indian Navy on 5 July 1948 and received at Bombay by Nehru on 15 September 1948.

⁹ The Agreement was signed on 23 August 1948.

¹⁰ See ante pp. 176-77.

Newspaper reports of new appointments are without foundation

12 The Minister for Commerce has removed control over the import of certain goods from certain sterling and soft currency areas including Switzerland and Sweden. A comprehensive public notice dated 26th July 1948 describing the principles governing the issue of import licences has been issued.¹¹

13 I addressed you a secret letter a few days ago about the economic situation in the country.¹² I attached with it certain memoranda of economists whom we had consulted. We have also consulted other groups like labour and trade union leaders, leading industrialists, bankers, etc. In view of the gravity of the crisis and the possibility of far reaching changes being necessary, we have consulted all these various groups representing different sections of the community. We intend to collect all the memoranda we have received on this subject from these different groups and to publish them soon in a small pamphlet which we shall send you.

14 Government have come to no decision so far on these important matters. But they will no doubt have to come to some decisions before long. I shall not discuss the various proposals made to meet the crisis, except to mention that there appears to be unanimity among all those consulted in favour of the reintroduction of fiscal controls of all essential commodities. That is a matter intimately affecting all provinces. Food comes first on the list of controls in these lists.¹³

11 On 26 July 1948 a comprehensive public notice describing the principles governing the issue of import licences for the period July-December 1948 was issued for the guidance of the importers. Earlier, on 3 and 22 July, open general licences liberalizing imports had been issued.

12 See ante item 28.

13 The Government of India decided on 21 September 1948 to reimpose control on the prices, procurement and the distribution of foodgrains.

This control and rationing inevitably involve widespread procurement. We have to remember that we are not likely to get much foodgrains from Pakistan because of the heavy rains as well as other causes. However much foodgrains we may get from abroad the primary consideration will be how much we can procure in our own country.

15 While the economic situation is undoubtedly bad in the sense that it is not under control and may rapidly deteriorate by further inflation and rise in prices it must be remembered that basically India's position is sound. But however sound the position the delicate mechanism of a nation's economic life once upset is apt to lead to widespread suffering. Therefore we have to deal with this emergency urgently and effectively. We have to remember that one of our richest areas the Punjab is for the moment out of the picture from the point of view of production. Many of its people are refugees who instead of producing merely consume. Another important fact to be remembered is a shift in income groups in recent years resulting in a diversion of purchasing power from the higher income groups to the rural sections of the community as well as to some others. This of course is a very desirable development but for the moment it does create difficulties because the needs of the latter groups are different and cannot be fully met.

16 I would again remind you that in this economic crisis of inflation etc. the strictest economy is needed and any schemes or projects involving large expenditure may have to be postponed. Provinces should not look up to the Centre for special help. This would apply to the policy of prohibition also. It is for the provinces to consider what they will do but in that consideration too much reliance should not be placed on help from the Centre.

17 The United Nations Kashmir Commission has gone to Karachi to get a final reply from Pakistan on their proposals for a ceasefire and truce. It is hoped that some final decision will be

arrived at within the next few days. We have made it clear that we are prepared to accept the ceasefire and truce but, of course we cannot be parties to the creation of a situation which might endanger the security of Kashmir state ¹⁴

18 Meanwhile a U N party has gone to Kashmir for what was rather wrongly described in a press note as a political and economic survey ¹⁵ There is going to be no such general survey by them. *Their main purpose is to meet members of government and officers*

19 The Hyderabad situation ¹⁶ has arrived at a stage when some kind of a positive action on our behalf may be needed. I shall be communicating with you separately in regard to this ¹⁷ Meanwhile, I shall only warn you to take all necessary measures for internal security. Reports sometimes reach us of intrigues by some Muslims here and there. There may be some such intrigues but it is clear that any large scale trouble from the Muslims as such in India is exceedingly unlikely. There is a far greater

and we cannot permit individuals or groups to take the law into their own hands especially at a moment of national crisis. If we allow things to go wrong even in a small way it will be difficult for us to correct them later.

20 There is yet another important consideration to be borne in mind. We function on the world stage today in a glare of publicity. If anything happens in India which is criticised or condemned outside it will react very much to our disadvantage. Whatever we do therefore we must follow the right path and not imagine that a narrow opportunism of the moment if it leads us astray can possibly benefit us in the end. As a democratic government we are the servants of the public and must give effect to their wishes. But this does not mean that we should permit wrong things to be done because members of the public unthinkingly ask us to do them. A party or a nation gains both prestige and success by adhering to the right policy even though it may not bring immediate results. India has built up some kind of a reputation for right and impartial conduct chiefly because of Mahatma Gandhi's magnificent personality and the emphasis he always laid on right means. That was not merely a moral precept but a wise and expedient policy. In the days of difficulty ahead of us we should try to remember the teaching of the Master and not allow ourselves to be led astray by momentary passion.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

In the complicated position national and international that we have to face today this turn of events in our favour is to be welcomed though it may not take us far

I am however writing to you more specially about Hyderabad Here there is no longer any static position and *events are marching with some speed* We have made a final appeal to the Nizam to allow our troops to go to Secunderabad This was three days ago and no reply has come yet ⁵ Obviously we cannot wait indefinitely for a reply and some action will have to be taken ⁶ There is one aspect of this or rather a possible reaction to it to which I must draw your particular attention even though I know that you are fully seized of the matter We must at all costs and with all our strength prevent any communal deterioration in any province The consequence of this will be harmful to us in many ways Nationally this will impede our effort and produce complications Internationally it will not only injure our good name but may have even more serious consequences Therefore we have to be prepared as much as possible to prevent this

So far as I can judge and I am supported by fairly reliable evidence there is nothing much to fear from any Muslim activity against the Indian Union The general position of the Muslims in the Indian Union is such that they are exceedingly unlikely to do anything which may bring swift reactions against them What we have to guard against specially therefore is any non Muslim aggression on Muslims This may well be feared if the Razakars in Hyderabad state misbehave towards non Muslims Even apart from that there is some danger of it

5 On 7 September 1948 India asked Hyderabad to disband the Razakars and allow Indian troops to be stationed at Secunderabad Rejecting these demands the Nizam's Government warned India on 10 September that any action by her might precipitate an upheaval of unprecedented nature "

6 Indian troops entered Hyderabad on 13 September and on 17 September the Nizam announced the acceptance of the Indian demands and ordered his troops to cease fire

9 September, 1948

Therefore it has become incumbent on us for the very success of our operations and not to alienate world opinion to give every protection to the Muslim minority in India. This ultimately applies to the Muslim minority in Hyderabad itself. Apart from adequate precautions police or other which must be taken there must be some attempt to educate public opinion quietly but clearly as to the evil consequences of any outbreak against Muslims in India. This is of the utmost consequence and I trust that your government will appreciate the full importance of what I am writing to you and take all necessary measures.

Every stress should be laid on the non communal aspect of the steps we might have to take. We are not out to punish the Muslims in Hyderabad but to protect everyone there Hindu or Muslim and to put an end to the disorders that are taking place in Hyderabad state.

In this matter the press can play a very important part and I would suggest to you to meet representatives of the press and explain to them the full implications of what I have said above. This should be done in two ways firstly by calling selected editors who can be addressed frankly and fully. Secondly larger numbers of journalists who might be spoken to off the record. Off the record conferences will be better than normal public press conferences.

It should be made perfectly clear that exaggerated news or the giving of publicity to vague rumours or indeed to anything that might excite public opinion is to do a grave disservice to India. We have had to deal with a number of reports in the press in regard to Hyderabad which we have found on enquiry to be grossly exaggerated. Sometimes they are without foundation. Recently a particularly ghastly report appeared in some newspapers about the massacre of a large number of men women and children in a village in Hyderabad by the Razakars.⁷ A full account of this was given with substantial

details. Nevertheless on enquiry being made through our military sources we have been unable to get any confirmation.

The presentation of news and views in newspapers in regard to Hyderabad thus becomes a matter of prime importance. It is desirable that such news should be checked before it is published not only in order to avoid the spread of rumours and unconfirmed news but also to avoid the publication of anything which accentuates communal ill will.

We have taken a step which involves dangers and difficulties. We had to take it. We have now to see it through and we must do it as effectively, efficiently, rapidly and humanely as possible.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
9 September 1948

My dear Premier *

Several provinces have in preparation or in some advanced stage Zamindari Abolition Bills. May I remind you that this highly important question should be considered in consultation with the Central Government and not in isolation. This has been necessitated because of several reasons

- ✓(1) Any policy should have a certain uniformity all over India
- (2) The Centre's capacity to help with grants or loans is strictly limited
- (3) As far as possible we should not do anything to encourage inflationary tendencies

It is desirable therefore for your government to consult the Central Government and more specially our Finance Ministry in regard to any such measure before it is finalised

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the fortnightly Letters

New Delhi
21 September, 1948

My dear Premier *

I have not written to you my usual middle of the month letter, as nearly all of you were here for conferences. We met then and discussed various matters

2 There is one important matter however to which I should like to draw your immediate attention. It appears that a number of Muslims were arrested when we commenced operations in Hyderabad. Presumably they were arrested for their sympathies with Hyderabad or some activities connected with it or on suspicion. Now that the Hyderabad affair is ended so far as the military operations were concerned there is no point in the persons being kept in prison or detention. I hope therefore that you will order their release unless there is some other substantial reason for their detention.

3 It is important that after the dramatic events in Hyderabad our policy should be as generous and friendly as possible not only to the people of Hyderabad but also to Muslims generally in India. There is no doubt that the Muslims as a whole in India helped our policy considerably by siding with the Union at a moment of crisis. This is a psychological moment for us to win over the goodwill of the Muslim masses by our friendly approaches to them. They have been hit hard by all the events of the past year and there is a sense of frustration and despair among them. What has happened in Hyderabad has created a situation which should lead to a stabilization of the communal situation in India or rather to a progressive elimination of the

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

21 September, 1948

communal sentiment, provided we act rightly It is not enough to allow matters to drift We should take some active steps to this end

4 In regard to Hyderabad, I would also beg of you to remember that the world's eyes are upon us and we have to act carefully and with wisdom It is desirable that as few as possible statements be issued or any remarks made without full thought Every word said counts and is pounced upon by our opponents We have a bad press abroad and there has been much criticism of our action¹ That criticism ignores the realities of the situation and is I think unjust Nevertheless we cannot ignore opinion abroad more specially when even many of our friends there share it to some extent Therefore I would suggest that we might impress upon others also to exercise some restraint in expression

5 You are aware that during the last session of the Central Legislature, a committee was formed to collect comforts and amenities etc., for our troops This committee has been named the Bharat Sena Sahayak Samiti² and Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan³ is the Chairman This committee requires both money and gifts in kind I hope you will help in giving publicity to the work of this committee and in other ways

6 It is now settled that I leave for England on October 5th to attend the Dominion Premiers Conference I expect to be away for about three weeks during which I hope to attend the U N Assembly session in Paris also

1 Most of the leading British newspapers were critical of Indian action.

2 Indian Army Aid Committee

3 Ammu Swaminadhan (1894-1978) Member of the Congress since 1930 founder member of All India Women's Conference and Secretary of India Women's Conference 1936 member Central Legislative Assembly 1945 member Constituent Assembly member Lok Sabha 1952

7 As you know decisions were taken at the recent Premiers Conference in favour of the reimposition of controls in regard to food cloth kerosene iron and steel and cement Some of these are of course already partly controlled The important items are food and cloth Any system of controls requires efficient governmental machinery and strict enforcement You will be informed of the precise proposals in regard to these matters Meanwhile I want to tell you that our Ministry of Industry and Supply is building up an Enforcement Department This was originally meant for cloth alone but in view of new developments it is clear that there should be an integration in regard to the enforcement of controls of various kinds We cannot have separate departments and separate machinery for the enforcement of different controls Generally speaking the same machinery should suffice for all both at the Centre and in the provinces The central machinery should be effective and efficient and should have the full cooperation of the provincial machinery

8 Mr Jaitley⁴ Inspector General of Police has been appointed Director of Enforcement He will have some senior officers under him covering various regions of India Under these senior officers it is proposed to have about 800 men of the rank of Inspectors (100) and Sub Inspectors (700) It is suggested that these 800 should be divided as follows 20% from the Police 30% from other services such as Rationing Central Excise Customs etc 50% public men

9 Your help is required in regard to the choice of these 800 men and more specially of the 50% who may be drawn from the public The age limit of these 50% should be 42 i.e. they should be under 42 Educationally they should have attained

4 Brij Bhushan Sharan Jaitley Joined Indian Police Service 1924 Director of Enforcement Textiles Ministry of Industry and Supply August 1948 January 1949 Inspector General of Hyderabad Deccan 1949

21 September, 1948

at least the Intermediate standard, or in the alternative, they should have a good knowledge of Hindi. Of course, integrity is essential as well as good health

10. In the choice of these men from the public, the Congress organisation might also be consulted

11. I am sure your government will give every help in the building up of this enforcement organisation

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
4 October 1948

My dear Premier

I am writing this letter to you on the eve of my departure for Europe. I am leaving tomorrow direct for London where I shall attend the Dominion Premiers Conference. About the middle of the month I shall take advantage of the week end to pay a brief visit to Paris from London in order to meet important representatives of some countries. I expect to meet there Mr Marshall¹ of the U S A Mr Vyshinsky² of the U S S R Dr Tsiang³ of China the French Foreign Minister⁴ and some others. I shall then return to London for the continuing sessions of the Premiers Conference. After that conference is over I shall go to Paris again for a few days. I am not yet sure of the date of my return to India but I believe I shall start on my journey back on the 28th of this month arriving in India on the 29th or 30th. During my absence the Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will be in charge of such functions as the Prime Minister performs and in case you have to make a reference you will kindly make it to him.

1 George C. Marshall (1880-1959) Chief of Staff U S army (1939-45) U S Ambassador to China 1945-47 Secretary of State 1947-49 and of Defence 1950-51

2 Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union 1949-53

3 Tingfu F. Tsiang (1895-1965) Republic of China's Permanent Representative to the United Nations 1947-62 Ambassador to U S A 1962-65

4 Robert Schuman (1886-1963) Prime Minister of France 1947-48 Foreign Minister July 1948-January 1953 President European Parliament Strasbourg March 1958-60 and its honorary President 1960-63

2 I shall be absorbed chiefly in foreign affairs and Commonwealth relations during my absence. May I say in this connection that the world situation is a complicated and delicate one and every word that is said in regard to it should be carefully weighed. Responsible Ministers in the provinces are not directly concerned with foreign policy. Nevertheless any remarks they may make have a certain importance in foreign eyes. I would therefore beg of you and your government to be a little careful in criticising foreign nations.

3 I have written to you during the last fortnight but I have not sent the usual fortnightly letter. Much has happened during this period, notably the speedy termination of the operations we undertook in Hyderabad. This has produced important results and gains for us quite apart from what has happened in Hyderabad state itself. The first gain is that it is established that the Central Government in India is supreme and that no part of India, state or other, can challenge the Centre's authority. On the eve of their departure from India the British made certain decisions which produced a good deal of confusion in regard to the states. Fortunately in regard to nearly all the states matters were settled peacefully and cooperatively. It was only in Kashmir and Hyderabad that trouble arose. But even in some other states there was the will to create trouble though not the capacity to do it. This question has now been settled once for all for the whole of India.

4 This is not a reversion to the old paramountcy of the British power because such paramountcy can only be exercised by an alien authority or an autocratic regime. In a democratic India it has no place for each part of India should have the same freedom and status as any other. Every state therefore necessarily has or will have the same status as a province in regard to representative institutions or individual freedom. In other words India will be a free partnership of provinces and states which have a large measure of autonomy but which are at the same time tied up closely to the Centre in whose direction

they all share

5 This is the first gain. The second gain is even more important. What has happened in Hyderabad has produced a very remarkable change in the communal atmosphere of India. Where there was fear previously, there is a sense of security and cooperation now. I received a very large number of telegrams of congratulations from all over India on the termination of the Hyderabad operations. Quite half of these were from Muslim organisations and individuals. Both Muslims and non Muslims have gone a long way to shed suspicion and fear.

6 This is indeed a development which is not only most welcome but is also of the highest significance. It relieves our minds of the continuing burden and allows us to concentrate on the work of building of the new India in cooperation with the various elements in the country. Provincial governments have to play an important part in this process. We should now take full advantage of this new sense of security and add to it by our own approach to every question.

7 Ever since the partition and the horrible things that followed, Muslims in India have been very hard hit psychologically even more so than otherwise. They have not felt sure of their position in this country. Gradually things have been improving, and Hyderabad has helped this process very greatly. It is for us now to take full advantage of this new atmosphere and produce the sense of absolute security in the minds of the Muslims and other minorities. The majority always owes a duty of this kind to minorities. We must not think in terms of copying what Pakistan does or think of retaliation. Both Hindu and Muslim, as well as Sikh or Christian or Parsi, must believe that they are as good citizens of India as anyone else. Therefore I suggest to you that while we should exercise vigilance, we should act generously and shed fear. If our governments function in this way, they will also help in removing the fear complex from other minds.

8 We have to face another difficulty and that is the Communist attempt to create trouble. Fortunately this has not succeeded in India but we have to be completely prepared for attempts at trouble of this kind. These must be nipped in the bud and not allowed to grow. We have not yet rid ourselves of that atmosphere of violence and disorder which came with partition. Any activity therefore which tends to violence is more dangerous now than it might be in a more peaceful state of affairs.

9 While we must be careful in checking all violent manifestations we must be equally careful in drawing the line at peaceful agitation. I have frequently written to you to exercise care and restraint in the suppression of civil liberties. To us who preach civil liberty at a thousand occasions any suppression is painful. When the vital needs of the State demand such suppression it has to be undertaken but there is always a danger of exceeding the necessities of a situation. A government with the power to change laws quickly by ordinance is apt to use that power too frequently.

10 I have noticed legislation by ordinance or otherwise becoming progressively harsh in regard to civil liberties. I must confess that I am greatly perturbed at this prospect. Such legislation should normally not be proceeded with without reference to the Government of India—that is to say the Home Ministry. It is obvious that the law and order problem in India is an integrated one and cannot be dealt with separately with any great success. It is obvious also that any organised subversive activity is also an all India problem. Therefore the Government of India must be kept fully in the picture by provincial governments.

11 I have found that the provincial governments do not do so and proceed with legislation without any reference to the Government of India. It is only later that they inform them. I do not challenge the authority of the provincial governments in

fight against inflation must be carried on with vigour on all fronts⁶

16 The situation in Kashmir might be said for the present to be more or less static. Diplomatically we have won a victory in the sense that Pakistan has been put very much in the wrong by their rejection of the ceasefire proposal of the United Nations Commission and by their being compelled to admit the presence of their troops in Kashmir. As a consequence of this we have formally asked the Pakistan Government to withdraw their troops.⁷ Our operations in Kashmir will of course, be carried on and must be carried on. But we do not propose to take any other action at present. We await the report of the United Nations Commission.

17 You will have noticed that I have repeatedly stated that we are entirely opposed to aggression and I have told Pakistan not to be afraid of any aggression from India. Of course, we have to meet their aggression wherever it may occur.⁸ This statement of mine represents not a vague sentiment but a definite policy which is not only in keeping with our general

6 The Central Government announced on 4 October 1948 a number of measures to fight inflation. These included reduction of government expenditure both at the Centre and in the provinces, priority to more productive projects and raising public funds through local taxes. Restrictions were also put on company dividends to curb purchasing power. New industries were to be encouraged through liberalized income tax and customs duties. Reimposition of control on sugar, iron and steel, kerosene and cement was decided upon and uniform legislation for industrial labour disputes contemplated.

7 Nehru reiterated in his cable to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on 27 August 1948 that as Pakistan had admitted to the U.N. Commission the presence of her troops in Kashmir, he must ask him to withdraw these troops as their presence constituted an act of aggression against India, of which Kashmir was an integral part.

8 Nehru wrote to Liaquat Ali Khan on 3 October 1948 that India had no aggressive intentions against Pakistan. Military action in Kashmir was not aggression but self defence.

outlook but is also very desirable from the strictly practical point of view. On the side of Pakistan wild statements are made in speech and writing and in the press. Pakistan is jittery and is suffering greatly from the fear complex. We must function as a strong, united and composed nation which does not shout and which does not lose its head whatever happens. There is no reason for us at all to get excited. Therefore a certain restraint signifying strength should be observed in statements in regard to Pakistan. Indeed, it would be a good thing if few public references were made to Pakistan. I can assure you that there is very little chance of any conflict with Pakistan so far as we are concerned. Of course, I exclude Kashmir from this, where conflict is continuing and cannot end as long as there is no satisfactory settlement and external aggression is stopped.

18 You know that Dr. John Matthai has been appointed as Minister for Finance. That is a very heavy and responsible charge. The Finance portfolio is in some ways the most important of all and I am very happy that Dr. John Matthai is in charge of it.

19 Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar is now our Railways and Transport Minister, another very difficult charge. Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar is a colleague for whom I have the greatest respect and I am sure he will deal with the difficult problems facing him adequately.

20 In order to help him in his heavy task, I have appointed Shri K. Santhanam⁹ as a Minister of State working in the Railways and Transport Ministry under Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar.

⁹ K. Santhanam (1895-1980). Arrested with Nehru at Nabha in 1923. Union Minister of State for Transport and Railways, 1948-52. Lt. Governor of Vindhya Pradesh, 1952-56. Chairman, Second Finance Commission, 1956-57.

21 Further, I have appointed Shri Khurshed Lal¹⁰ as a Deputy Minister who will function in the Communications Ministry under Shri Rafi Ahmad Kidwai¹¹ It is my intention, on my return from Europe to appoint some more Deputy Ministers to relieve Ministers of a part of their work

22 A question has been asked us about the effect on Hindu temples of zamindari legislation that is to say in regard to the acquisition of temple lands It has been pointed out that some of the great temples of South India have built up a kind of community centres and we should be careful not to break up these community centres I shall be grateful to you if you could let me know what your views are on this subject and how your province proposes to deal with this matter in connection with zamindari legislation Of course this will apply not to Hindu temples only but to other places of religious worship and their endowments It seems to me clear that all public endowments connected with places of worship should be controlled and audited by governmental agencies in order to avoid private misuse of such funds

23 You must have read in the newspapers that when the Hyderabad issue came before the Security Council and the U N the Argentine representative was peculiarly offensive to India¹² You will be glad to know that the Argentine Government through their Ambassador in Paris has conveyed to the leader of our Delegation the amplest apologies for this behaviour of their representative in the Security Council They

10 Khurshed Lal (1903-1950) Congressman from Dehra Dun member Constituent Assembly Deputy Minister Central Government 1948-50

11 (1894-1954) Congressman from U P Minister for Revenue U P 1937-39 and Home and Revenue 1946-47 Union Minister for Communications 1947-51 and of Food and Agriculture 1952-54

12 Jose Arce Argentina's representative in the Security Council said on 20 September 1948 that the march of the Indian troops towards the capital of Hyderabad reminds me of the march of the Italian troops towards the Abyssinian capital

have said that he had no business to behave in this manner and that it is Argentina's desire to be friendly to India and even when they cannot completely line up with India on any issue not to oppose her. We have naturally accepted this apology with good grace and expressed our pleasure at it and hope that our relations with Argentina will improve.

24 There is one matter to which I should like to draw your special attention. Governments both central and provincial have a great deal of financial patronage at their disposal in regard to licences, contracts, etc. It is important that this patronage should not go to any individual whose record in regard to payment of income tax has been bad. This matter specially concerns the various departments of the Government of India and I have drawn their attention to it. I have asked them to keep in close touch with our Income Tax Department in regard to the granting of any such financial patronage. In so far as this concerns your government, I hope you will be good enough to bear this in mind. People who are suspected of defrauding government revenues cannot be made recipients of government favour financially.

25 If I may say so, I have a feeling that India has turned the corner more specially since these Hyderabad operations. We are on the upgrade now. The atmosphere is different and better and we have greater chances now of going ahead with our constructive work. This work is as much psychological as other. I wish you success in this.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
16 November 1948

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you after nearly six weeks. During my absence in Europe the Deputy Prime Minister was good enough to continue these fortnightly letters¹

2 Since my return I have been overwhelmed with work and I fear I cannot write to you at present as fully as I would have liked to. Some of the Premiers are attending the Constituent Assembly session and I hope to meet them here from time to time.

3 My visit to Europe was full of interest and I had the good fortune to meet a large number of prominent statesmen and to discuss with them matters of importance in the international sphere. This enabled me to form a clearer picture of current events and the forces at work. I have said something about these matters in public utterances which you might have seen. Naturally I could not disclose all the contents of my talks nor indeed can I write in any great detail about them.

4 I was struck forcibly by the high position that India had already attained in the eyes of other nations. Whether we want it or not, this great responsibility has come to us. We cannot

¹ Letters of 15 October and 1 November 1948 printed in *Select Correspondence of Sardar Patel 1945-50* Vol. 2 Ed. V. Shankar (Ahmedabad 1977) pp. 327-350.

escape it and the only other thing to do is to try to live up to it. That involves a wider vision and our living up to certain standards of national and international conduct. Any narrowness and petty mindedness in the conduct of our own affairs or in our relations with the world at large would injure India's cause greatly. The world looks to us but even more so the Asian countries look to us. I had occasion to meet the representatives of almost every Asian country in Paris and later in Cairo and almost all of them expressed an earnest wish for closer relations with India and among themselves. They wanted India to take the lead in this matter. I told them that there was no question of leadership but India was eager to cooperate to the fullest extent possible with her sister nations in Asia. It is not clear what exact steps we can take because obviously any attempt to have a closer relationship might well lead to difficulties. The matter is being investigated.

5 In regard to India and the Commonwealth I proceeded on two assumptions

(1) That India must be a completely independent Republic with full control of her domestic and foreign policy as well as everything else that appertains to an independent country

(2) That in this context it was desirable to maintain some form of association with the U.K. and the Commonwealth because this seemed to me advantageous both from our national point of view and that of world peace at large

It is true that India cannot make much difference in the game of power politics today. But I began to feel that India can make some difference and even some difference may lead to great results at critical moments. In our interests as well as that of the world we cannot afford to isolate ourselves at this critical stage. I must say that I had the friendliest reception from the U.K. Government and the other Commonwealth countries represented at the conference in London. I had long talks with each one of them.

6 The situation in Europe continues to be tense and critical chiefly on account of Berlin. But I formed the opinion that no war is in prospect unless some major folly occurs. The real reason is that no one is prepared for war. This gives us some time to work for peace. No crisis endures at a high pitch for a long time. It leads to war or to a lessening of the crisis. As there appears to be no likelihood of war I concluded that there will be a toning down of the crisis in Europe.

7 In China events have marched rapidly and it would appear that a great part of North China will go to the Communists. The Nationalist Government appears to be very weak and very disunited.² Possibly after a while the communist forces will stop their advance and consolidate the large areas they have gained. This will mean some kind of a division of China into two vast areas. The victory of communism in China is of great moment to Asia and the world. I do not think this will have any immediate results in the rest of Asia except in so far as it encourages communist elements elsewhere.

8 It is natural that the Soviet Union should rejoice at the victory of the Communists in China. But from reliable sources, it appears that the Soviets have thus far not given any direct help to the Chinese Communists.

9 In South East Asia it might be said that the Communist upheavals have been controlled and in some cases the Communists have been fully held or even suppressed. One of the most unfortunate of these is in Indonesia where the gallant young Republic, fighting for its freedom against the Dutch, was faced by a Communist uprising.³ This may be said to be due

² The Nationalist Government dominated at this time by the Kuomintang party came under attack from the Social Democrats and the Young China party who favoured peace talks with the Communists. On the other hand the conservative elements in the party insisted upon securing military assistance from the United States to fight the Communists.

³ On 11 September 1948 pro communist troops seized control of the city of Madiun and certain other places in Java.

partly at least to the aggressive policy of the Dutch which led many people in Indonesia to lose faith in the existing government as it could not deliver the goods. Frustrated, they looked for something else, and some of them chose the Communists. The Republic has triumphed for the moment, but it depends on future Dutch policy. If colonialism continues anywhere in South East Asia, the natural result will be a growth of communism. Indonesia has been, and will continue to be to a large extent, in danger of Dutch military aggression. If any such thing happens, there will be the most bitter struggle in Indonesia. In a military sense, the Dutch will soon win, of course, but they will have then to deal with continuous guerilla warfare and scorched earth policy. The Indonesians will fight to the last and even destroy their fair country rather than yield to the Dutch. The Dutch are playing the old game of empire by setting up puppet states. I have no doubt that sooner or later the Dutch will have to go.

10 Our Government has taken up a strong line in support of the Indonesian Republic and we have been in constant touch with the U.K., U.S.A. and several other governments.⁴ I think I can say that our action in this matter has produced some results. It may even prevent any further Dutch aggression, though we cannot be sure of that. We have also been in constant touch with the Indonesian Republic in their grave hour of crisis. For them this help of ours has meant much, and the President⁵ and the Vice President⁶ of the Republic have

4 The Government of India had written to the Governments of U.K. and U.S.A. to persuade the Dutch to reach a settlement with the Republicans. Earlier the Republican leaders had sought the advice of the Government of India as to whether they should negotiate with the visiting Dutch delegation in view of imminent Dutch police action.

5 Achmed Soekarno (1897-1970) Leader of the Indonesian nationalist movement. President of Indonesia. 1945-67.

6 Mohammad Hatta (1902-1980) Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia. 1945-56. was also Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs. 1948-50.

their warm thanks for the action we have taken. The
has to be watched carefully. We have sent a new
General to Batavia—Dr. Alagappan.⁷

Kashmir, I am sorry to say there is still no likelihood of
ment and therefore we have to fight on. We have
had some gains in the Ladakh valley and on the route
over the Zoji La. Yesterday we captured Dras which is
an important centre. Operations are still proceeding. When
we succeed, we shall have freed the whole of Ladakh.

12 Some operations on our part are proceeding in the
Poonch area in order to connect Poonch town to the other
areas under us. All this does not directly affect the military con-
flict in the major places such as Uri and Tithwal. It will hardly
be possible to do much, in these areas, after the winter sets in
in earnest.

13 One of our most important problems is that of the exodus
from East Bengal to West. This is very largely due to the
political and economic conditions in East Bengal. We can do
very little to improve conditions in East Bengal. But the
problem continues to grow and it is essential that a way out
should be found.

14 If it is admitted that the exodus must be stopped in the
interests of all concerned, then we must not do anything which
might encourage the exodus. In this matter, newspapers can
help greatly. I am afraid that many newspapers do not
understand the realities of the situation and their writings have
often encouraged the exodus. It would be desirable to explain
to newspapermen privately this position and request them not
to do anything which hardens a difficult situation.

⁷ S. C. Alagappan. Belonged to the Indian Medical Service, joined the
Indian National Army and served as a member of the Azad Hind provisional
government. Consul General for India in Indonesia, 1948.

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15 The steps we took to fight inflation have not borne any obvious fruit yet though there are definite indications that there is likely to be some improvement after a month or two. Meanwhile we have to face the fact that owing to the rise in cost of living⁸ we have to do something substantial to relieve *our workers and others from the difficulties they have to face*. There is a demand for the addition to their dearness allowance. It is a logical demand in view of the rise in the cost of living. *Nevertheless it is a demand which it is exceedingly difficult to fulfil*. For the mere act of fulfilling it would mean helping inflation to grow. A committee of the Cabinet is considering this matter carefully.

16 Labour is obviously restive and is often exploited for wrong ends. Recently a token general strike was proclaimed in Delhi. Fortunately this did not succeed at all but the situation is not a happy one and has to be watched very carefully. Any anti social action must necessarily be met by Government with all its strength if necessary so as to protect the community and in order to prevent all round deterioration. But it must always be remembered that mere repression is no remedy for such a contingency. Labour must therefore be treated with all friendliness and the situation explained to them. They should be consulted wherever possible so that a part of the responsibility might be shouldered by them. Where it is necessary to arrest or detain people encouraging unsocial action this has to be done. But this must not be overdone and as soon as the necessity for it is passed those who are detained for this purpose might be released. I have already drawn your attention to the reactions abroad in regard to any action that we take against trade unions or labour generally. A suppression of the strike does not lead to ending of the conflict which continues below the surface. We have to aim at cooperative action for production and for higher standards. Mere

⁸ For example the cost of living index for Bombay stood at 302 in November compared to 258 in January 1948.

repression will not lead to this though repression is necessary occasionally We must therefore keep the larger end in view all the time

17 The recent communal outbreak in Calcutta was depressing⁹ It showed that evil forces are still at work In this matter there can be no leniency for that would be a very shortsighted policy So far as the minorities in India are concerned we are pledged to protect them and give them their full rights and we must honour that pledge Any weakening on this issue would do us very great harm

18 In this connection I should like to revert to the situation in East Bengal Certain suggestions have been made that in order to exercise some pressure on the Pakistan Government we might point out to them that in case large numbers of people continue to come from East Bengal to West Bengal the question of further territory being provided for them might arise¹⁰ Another suggestion has been made that if Hindus come over from East Bengal to West Bengal Muslims might go from West to East Bengal in like proportion¹¹ All this may be strictly logical but even a hint of this kind of thing is fraught with the most dangerous consequences First of all, the result of any such propaganda would be an immediate worsening of the situation and a largely increased exodus Secondly it would mean our giving up the idea of a secular State for which we stand Indeed it would mean an enormous upheaval all over India and a complete unsettling of all that we have done The future would become dark and we would lose all credit, not only in India but abroad I would therefore beg of you to

9 Several persons were injured when the Muharram procession was attacked on 13 November

10 Patel speculated on these lines in the course of his address at a public meeting in Nagpur on 4 November

11 In August 1948 B C Roy Chief Minister of West Bengal drew Nehru's attention to this demand being made in his province

explain privately and otherwise this situation to others more specially to newspapermen

19 The issues before us have been and are still so difficult and vital that we must be very careful of the general line we adopt in regard to them. A false move will injure us and discredit us and bring greater trouble in its train. There is no doubt that the Pakistan Government and the East Bengal Government do not play fair and are responsible for much that is happening. It is even truer to say that the petty officials of East Bengal are making it difficult for Hindus to function there. Even persons like Pyarelal ¹² Mahatma's secretary have got into trouble ¹³ If Pyarelal cannot work there much less can others. Admitting therefore the wrong on the side of Pakistan we must determine our own policy. That policy cannot be one of wrong for wrong or of retaliation. It has to be a firm policy of not submitting to wrong. But anything in the nature of retaliation does not lead to an ending of the conflict or a settlement but to an increasing conflict with all the consequences that follow. I think that while we must be firm about the major matters our general attitude in public should not be an aggressive one. Pakistan is at present suffering from something in the nature of hysteria and a fear that India is going to attack it. That fear is completely unjustified. There is no question on our side of taking aggressive action in regard to Pakistan. But sometimes our newspapers write in a vein which increases this hysteria on the other side. In any event we should not behave in a hysterical or even excited way. That is not a sign of strength or firmness. If we give a continuing lead both in firmness and in peaceful approach I am sure this will bear results on the other side.

12 (1899-1982) Worked with Mahatma Gandhi and on the death of Mahadev Desai in 1942 became his private secretary

13 Pyarelal had continued Mahatma Gandhi's work of restoring peace in the not affected district of Noakhali. To discredit him and make him leave Noakhali weapons were placed in his room

20 We are at last sending Shri S K Basu¹⁴ as our Deputy High Commissioner to Dacca. I hope that his presence there will help in easing the situation. But the situation can finally only be eased by a combined effort on our part and of course on the part of Pakistan.

21 There is one matter which has made me think hard and I want to share my apprehension with you. I think there has been a *deterioration in the work of our public services*. To some extent this was perhaps inevitable because of the rapid changes that have taken place and the quick promotions which have followed. Nevertheless it is a disturbing development and we have to be on our guard against it. One reason for this deterioration appears to me to be due to an excess of provincialism which sometimes sacrifices quality in favour of some man from the same province. We have many first rate men in our services. But it is true that the number of really good men for a country like India is really limited. Whatever policy we might adopt it is ultimately the human material that counts. If we lower the tone of the material our work will suffer greatly. The British Government in India in spite of its numerous failings had set up a more or less efficient administration for the purposes they had in view. Those purposes were not always to our liking and were sometimes directly opposed to our objectives. Nevertheless an efficient administration was worthwhile and a good thing. It would be most unfortunate if we lose this legacy and allow our administration to deteriorate. We have of course to change the whole tone of that administration and give it different objectives. But efficient it must remain or else all our work becomes sloppy and bad. Therefore in this matter any other consideration such as provincialism must not be allowed to come in the way.

14 (1890-1977) Mayor of Calcutta. 1933-34 Minister Government of Bengal. 1941 Deputy High Commissioner in Dhaka. 1948-50

22 This applies more specially to those services and branches of activity which require experts of any kind for instance medicine science technology, etc I have noticed a tendency to remove able and experienced medical men from their posts in order to make room for some provincial person who is obviously not so good I do hope that you will encourage no such tendency

23 I am particularly concerned about science and technology Recently some very eminent British scientists came to India and investigated conditions for scientific and technical work here Their report is an interesting one and I have had occasion to have personal talks with them in England They told me that the student material here was very good so far as science was concerned It is also well known that we have some first rate scientists Nevertheless teaching generally according to them was poor and often enough the wrong men were in charge of both teaching and the executive work in scientific and technical institutions Very little real research work was being done Students often had little respect for their teachers simply because the teachers were not of outstanding merit They gathered the impression that appointments were governed by factors other than efficiency and real capacity

24 Another thing that they pointed out was the wastage of good scientific talent Bright young men who had been trained abroad or in India found no opening while second rate people were being continually appointed If this is true as I believe it is then we are heading for a decline in our scientific work That would be disastrous I would beg of you to give thought to these matters and to see to it that no other consideration but sheer merit prevails in appointments

25 Most of our service rules were meant for the old type of civil servants They do not apply to scientific and other workers Thus the civil service age limit is absurd for a scientist Many scientists have done their best work in the later years of their

life We are too poor in good scientific material to allow a man to retire when he can do good work

26 May I express to you my grateful thanks for the message of good wishes that you sent on my birthday?¹⁵ I have been overwhelmed with these good wishes from all over the country and abroad and I have felt very humble in the face of this tremendous affection and confidence that has been expressed in me No single man can be worthy of this affection All I can say is, I shall try my utmost not to prove false to the confidence that has been placed in me But it is not I or any one else that can do much It is we all of us all over India, that can jointly do a great deal May we all have the strength and wisdom to cooperate together in the great tasks ahead and to serve our country and humanity

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

¹⁵ Jawaharlal Nehru was 59 years old on 14 November 1948 Later his birthday began to be celebrated as the Children's Day

New Delhi
6 December 1948

My dear Premier,

Forgive me for the delay in writing to you. Work here has been very heavy and there is no promise of relief in the future either. Both the domestic and the international situation require constant vigilance. In addition we have the Constituent Assembly sitting from day to day and the coming annual session of the Congress at Jaipur.¹ I shall probably not be able to write to you as usual about the middle of the month as I shall be away in Jaipur then.

2 *Foreign Affairs*—The general situation in Europe continues tense but it may be said to be less critical than it has been for some time past. Attempts are again being made to resolve the Berlin crisis.² I think that all the parties concerned are tired of this conflict in Berlin and are desirous of ending it. But prestige comes in the way as also some ultimate interest.

3 The most important developments in the international field have been the series of victories of the forces of Communist China. Reports of big battles occur in the newspapers, but there have hardly been any real battles on a big scale despite these reports. There has been a growing inner weakness in the National Government and troops have often walked over to the

1 The session was held from 14 to 20 December 1948.

2 The four powers accepted the plan proposed by John Atilio Bramuglia of Argentina. President of the U.N. Security Council according to which a committee of experts from neutral countries was to be set up to solve the currency deadlock in Berlin.

other side. The economic situation in China has been very bad and every effort made to better it has failed. We have little news of what is happening in the communist area, but it would appear that there is greater efficiency and integrity in the public administration there. It is true that they have not had so far to face the problem of administering great cities. Knowing the difficulty of dealing with a great city, the Communists do not seem to be anxious to occupy any one of these. If they really wanted to, there is little doubt that they could reach Shanghai or Nanking. Ultimately they might do so, but they seem to be in no hurry and are more intent on consolidating their position.

4 The National Government may have to leave Nanking and the problem arose for us as to what our Embassy should do. We have decided that our Embassy should stay on in Nanking till further developments take place. That is also the decision of most of the other Embassies in Nanking. No one knows what the consequences of the withdrawal of the National Government may be. It may result in a splitting of China into two major parts or, which is perhaps more likely, into one major communist part and a number of other parts. In the course of its past history, China has often been split up in this way. Unfortunately, the National Government appears to have ceased to be national in any real sense of the word. It represents only some particular groups, and many other groups which are anti Communist, do not now support the National Government. These groups are beginning to think that almost anything is better than the continuation of the present state of affairs.

5 The leaders of the Communists in China are able and experienced men as they have shown in the way they have built up their territories. Their policy appears to be to form what they call a coalition government for China, that is to say a government in which other elements, including some Kuomintang elements will be represented. This government would inevitably be dominated by the Communists. Probably

the Communist leaders will not put forward any remarkably communist policy to begin with but will try to consolidate on some other level to the same extent as they have done in the other regions under their control. Later, further developments might take place.

6 As things are, it appears almost inevitable that a great part of China will come under the control of the Communists. They will immediately introduce far reaching agrarian reforms and try to build up industry. In Manchuria they have an industrial set up which the Japanese had built up. Another area of China which is eminently suited for industrial development is the province of Yunnan which borders Burma and Siam.

7 The victory and consolidation of the Chinese Communists is going to have far reaching results all over South East Asia and ultimately in the world. India will naturally be affected by it though there is no reason to fear any direct conflict. The future of Tibet may become a subject for argument. Indo China and Siam both of which have large numbers of Chinese will be powerfully affected. So also Burma. In view of all these possibilities and probabilities we have to watch this rapidly developing situation in China with great care and attention.

8 Another highly important development in Asia is taking place in Indonesia where for some time past the Dutch have been threatening what they call police action. The Government of India have all along supported diplomatically the Indonesian Republic and have protested against the attitude of the Netherlands Government. When I was in London and Paris I took up this matter specially with other Governments. I pointed out that if the Dutch took military action in Indonesia this would have the gravest consequences. No doubt the Dutch would gain military control of the greater part of the Republic but they would have to face unceasing guerilla warfare of the bitterest kind. The result however long delayed could only be the elimination of every Dutchman from Indonesia. It is

inconceivable that Dutch colonial rule can continue for long in Indonesia

9 I pointed out that the U S A and the U K Governments would to some extent share in the unpopularity of the Dutch in Asia as it was generally believed that the Dutch would not take any military measures if the U S A and the U K wanted to stop them My arguments had some effect and I know that both the U S A and U K Governments brought considerable pressure to bear on the Dutch to refrain from any such action I think it may be said that owing to India's insistence on this issue Dutch military action did not take place then or upto now It is however difficult to say what developments the future will bring There are indications that the Dutch are on the verge of taking military steps and the last conference with the Indonesian Republic has broken down The demand of the Dutch is practically for a surrender all along the line of the Indonesian Republic including the disbandment and disintegration of the Republican Army That of course would put the Indonesians completely at the mercy of the Dutch and the Indonesian Government has refused to agree to this although it has agreed to most other Dutch proposals

10 We have been in constant touch with the Indonesian Republic Government and I have invited President Soekarno to visit if it is possible for him to leave his country at this critical stage In this matter India has stood up before the world for the rights of Asian people and Asian countries and against a continuation of colonialism and imperialism I regret to say that some of the Asian countries have been lukewarm in this matter and have not hesitated to intrigue with other powers That is a poor outlook for Asian unity

11 It is a matter of special satisfaction to me that we have championed the rights in Indonesia of a Muslim people That indicates more than any profession that we stand for national freedom apart from religion

12 Recently the South West African issue came up before the United Nations. Here also India's attitude was a straight forward one championing the cause of the Africans and against the domination of the Union of South Africa over South West Africa.³ Again we saw that curious spectacle of some Asian countries including some of the Arab countries and Turkey and Pakistan wobbling on this issue and remaining neutral, or actually voting against the Indian proposition.⁴ I am quite sure that India's adherence to principle, in these vital matters was the right course to adopt and will bear fruit both for the good of India and for the other peoples of Asia and Africa. India's prestige and reputation gradually but surely goes up in the eyes of the world though we may not succeed in any particular vote in the United Nations.

13 In Japan the sentence of death passed on Japanese war leaders⁵ has met with a great deal of adverse criticism in India. The Indian judge on that Commission Justice Pal⁶ wrote a

3 At the U N Trusteeship Committee meeting on 16 November the Indian delegation moved an amendment to the resolution on South West Africa proposing that this territory be placed under the United Nations trusteeship system and South Africa stopped from integrating it with her Union. The amendment was lost by one vote while there were 11 abstentions. India opposed the main resolution passed by the U N General Assembly on 26 November which called upon South Africa to report to the U N periodically about conditions in South West Africa and which also expressed its satisfaction over the assurance given by South Africa that it had no intention of annexing South West Africa. India's criticism was that as the resolution did not take into account the fears expressed by the people of Namibia (South West Africa), it was therefore weak.

4 The Asian countries which abstained from voting on the Indian amendment were Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Syria. Those voting against included Australia.

5 On 12 November 1948 the former Prime Minister of Japan, Hideki Tojo, and 24 other persons were charged for war crimes by the International Military Tribunal set up by eleven nations in Tokyo.

6 Radhabinod Pal (1886-1967) Eminent jurist, Vice Chancellor, Calcutta University, 1944-46. Member International Military Tribunal, Tokyo, 1946-48. Member U N International Law Commission, 1961-67.

strong dissentient judgement ⁷ That judgement gave expression to many opinions and theories with which the Government of India could not associate itself Justice Pal was of course, not functioning in the Commission as a representative of the Government of India but as an eminent judge in his individual capacity Nevertheless, most of us have felt that it is unfortunate that death sentences should be passed at this stage on war leaders We have felt, however, that an official protest would not do any good either to the persons concerned or to the cause we have at heart, and therefore we have not intervened officially

14 In Burma, the Land Nationalisation Act⁸ has hit Indian interests in land hard We have been continually pressing the Burmese Government to make some changes in this Act but without any success so far ⁹ It is now proposed with the consent of the Burma Government to send a deputation headed by Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya ¹⁰ to Burma in the last week of December This Commission will discuss the matter with the Burmese Government

15. Although the attitude of the Burmese Government has been unyielding thus far, we must recognise that they are facing a most difficult situation in their own country There is rebellion and disorder and they cannot easily take any step which may weaken their position with the general public They

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are a government committed to socialist policies¹¹ I must say also that the Prime Minister, Thakin Nu has taken special pains to explain to us the position in regard to this matter and other matters in Burma. He sent one of his Ministers,¹² U Win,¹³ specially to Delhi to place their viewpoint before us and to invite our delegation to go there

16 You must have seen the correspondence that was published in regard to the Ceylon Citizenship Bill¹⁴ I regret that no agreement could be arrived at between our Government and that of Ceylon. There the matter stands at present and the Ceylon Government is proceeding with this bill. Perhaps some changes might be made in it at a later stage. There are certainly strong elements in Ceylon, even apart from the Indians who want a cordial and close relationship between India and Ceylon.

17 In our dealings with our neighbour countries like Burma and Ceylon we have always to keep in mind two factors. One, of course is to protect Indian interests the other is our long distance policy of being friendly with these countries. We are the big brother and we have to proceed a little gently so as not to create barriers in the way of future cooperation. At the same time we cannot accept any wrong done to Indian citizens.

18 In Ceylon the additional difficulty arises because we are dealing with Indians who claim to be Ceylonese citizens. As

11 On 26 May 1948 Thakin Nu had announced a fifteen-point programme for leftist unity.

12 On 29-30 November 1948.

13 (1905-1969) Burma's High Commissioner to India 1947 Minister for Education 1948 Ambassador to India 1948-50 Ambassador to the United States 1955-59.

14 The Bill proposed conditions for citizenship which were regarded as highly discriminatory against the Indian settlers in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Government's reluctance to amend the Bill therefore led to the release on 26 November of the correspondence between the two Governments. The Bill was however passed on 21 January 1949.

may flow from mutual and reciprocal arrangements between any two Commonwealth countries. The position remains what I have already told you. India is a completely independent country without any limitation. At the same time a certain association of some free countries takes place because it is felt that this will be to India's advantage as well as the world's. We are not tied down to any policy. No citizen of the Indian Republic would bear any allegiance to any foreign authority, King or other. Our allegiance will be to India alone. That has been the approach. But it is not yet clear how things will shape themselves.

21 *United Nations*—I have already referred to the activities of the Indian Delegation in regard to South West Africa. The question of Indians in South Africa has not yet come up before the U.N. and it is rather doubtful if it will be raised during this session.

22 *The Kashmir Commission's Report* was presented to the Security Council and has been published.¹⁶ The Report is a factual one, not unfavourable to us, but not making any particular recommendations. Subsequent developments on this issue have not been very satisfactory. An attempt is being made to find out some general formula for a possible plebiscite in the distant future. Our position is that the first thing that should be done is to give effect to the Commission's resolution of withdrawal of Pakistan armies from Kashmir state. Till that happens, the other questions can hardly be dealt with. We are of course committed to the future of Kashmir being decided by the people of Kashmir state and we shall stand by that.

23 Military developments in Kashmir, though not major in any sense, have had important consequences. We have practically freed the Ladakh valley of the enemy and we have captured Mendhar, thus establishing a road link with Poonch.

¹⁶ Published on 24 November 1948.

city These were not major operations but they did involve great skill in engineering and staff work and our army is to be congratulated We had to undertake these operations to clear up our supply route to Leh and Poonch The latter city had been cut off There has been a great deal of shouting by representatives of Pakistan in the United Nations about these operations and there was some debate in the Security Council ¹⁷ We have made it clear to the Security Council that we have strictly abided by every assurance that we have given and that obviously till there is a truce we must protect ourselves from aggression In view of the winter setting in there is not likely to be any substantial military operation in Kashmir state for some months Our armies there have had a hard time and a great part of it has served continuously under the most difficult conditions for over a year We are now relieving some of our forces and giving them much needed respite

24 The Security Council has also had before it Pakistan's complaint about Hyderabad ¹⁸ After making our position clear we have withdrawn our special representative for this issue We do not recognise that any matter has arisen which can be considered by the Security Council in regard to Hyderabad I must confess that we have been disappointed at the attitude taken up by some of the representatives of the powers Pakistan's record in Hyderabad has been shown to be a bad one Large sums of money have passed to them from Hyderabad ¹⁹ and for months past they intrigued and misled the Nizam and others in Hyderabad

17 The Security Council met on 25 November 1948 to consider the appeal of the Pakistan Foreign Minister for some immediate action to avoid an armed conflict of the most serious magnitude between Pakistan and India over Kashmir It was alleged that the Indian army had started an all-out offensive to obtain possession of Western Kashmir

18 The Security Council also heard on 25 November Pakistan's complaint that the situation in Hyderabad had become so grave as to call for an immediate reopening of the question

19 An enquiry into Hyderabad's affairs had revealed that about Rs 6 crores were paid to Pakistan officials from the Hyderabad treasury

this exodus. There is often a great deal of loose talk on this subject which does no good to anybody and actually encourages the exodus. That must be avoided. In particular the press must be requested to avoid saying anything which adds to friction and the fear complex on either side.

28 Among other subjects to be discussed at this conference are financial dues, disputes about military stores and certain boundary disputes in Bengal. It is proposed to make the implementation of any Inter Dominion Agreement a Dominion matter. This will avoid delay and bring about quick decisions and implementation. Secondly, that a monthly meeting of one Dominion Minister of each State should take place to consider implementation. Thirdly, that a press committee should be formed to exercise some control in regard to writings about Inter Dominion matters.

29 I might inform you that the status of High Commissioners has now been raised and corresponds to that of Ambassadors. Thus our High Commissioners in Commonwealth countries have the status of Ambassadors and *vice versa*.

30 The Constituent Assembly is proceeding with the Draft Constitution but the pace of progress is exceedingly slow. We had hoped that the Constitution will be finalised early in January and that we can celebrate the passage of the new Constitution on January 26. But that hardly seems feasible now.

31 The question of the rehabilitation of refugees had tended in past months to be considered as a somewhat routine matter. The Cabinet has decided that this must be viewed as top priority and has appointed a special committee of its own to supervise its work. It is highly important that we should have the fullest cooperation between the Central, provincial and state governments. I would beg of you to help us in this. The longer this question continues unsolved the greater our

difficulties and our expenditure, apart from the human tragedy involved

32 I regret that the inflationary position has not shown any marked improvement. I do hope that your government will take every step to check this inflation and to see that the new controls are effectively worked. Every delay in this worsens the situation. I find that the cloth control has not been effective at all and mischief makers continue to profit at the expense of the nation and the community. This must be stopped.

33 This inflation compels us to cut down every expenditure that is not vital. It is a matter of deep grief to me that some of our schemes and projects have to be given up or postponed, but there is no help for it for we must fight this inflation. A Priorities Committee of the Cabinet has been set up to deal with all development schemes from this point of view.

34 I regret that some people have been encouraging a general strike on the part of railwaymen.²⁴ Any more irresponsible advice at this stage, I can hardly imagine. With all my sympathy for labour and my desire to help it, I just do not see how a strike can achieve this object. It can achieve only one object and that is to add to our difficulties—to worsen the economic situation—to delay transport to important theatres of activities in Kashmir and thus upset our plans there, and, what is perhaps the worst of all—to create a cleavage between railwaymen and the rest of the community. It is obvious that the general public will view with dismay and irritation any attempt to have a general strike. I trust, therefore, that people who are concerned with this matter will act with a full sense of responsibility.

24 The All India Railwaymen's Federation meeting at Nagpur on 25 November 1948 under the chairmanship of Jayaprakash Narayan directed its affiliated unions to take a strike ballot and report by 20 January 1949.

35 We have received numerous warnings about the activities of the R S S and their intention to start satyagraha in the near future²⁵ possibly at the time of the Congress session in Jaipur when many of our Ministers and others will be away from their headquarters. For the R S S to talk of satyagraha is rather a contradiction in terms because the R S S is about as far removed from the spirit of satyagraha as any organisation can be. The R S S has been essentially a secret organisation with a public facade having no rules of membership no registers no accounts although large sums are collected. They do not believe in peaceful methods or in satyagraha. What they say in public is entirely opposed to what they do in private. Every provincial government has had plenty of experience of their activities. One does not mind or at any rate one accepts an opponent. But it is distressing that any organisation consisting of large numbers of young men should be so utterly little minded and lacking in not only vision but in commonsense or common understanding. The R S S is typical in this respect of the type of organisation that grew up in various parts of Europe in support of fascism. It attracts people essentially from the lower middle class many of them frustrated many of them with vague ideas and little thought behind them.

36 It is clear that we cannot put up with any challenge from the R S S and the sooner this is finally realised by the R S S and others the better. If so each provincial government must be wide awake and take necessary action at the earliest moment it considers necessary.

37 The question of zamindari abolition has become a difficult legal and constitutional one²⁶. It affects indeed even

25 Satyagraha was organised by the R S S from 8 December 1948 to 19 January 1949 to demand the release of their leaders and removal of the ban on their organisation.

26 To forestall any challenge by the zamindars of the zamindari abolition bills in the courts on the plea that the rate of compensation provided was grossly inadequate the Constituent Assembly sought to give the final authority to the legislatures for fixing the rate of compensation and to keep the Acts out of the purview of the courts.

the Constitution that we are framing Various legal interpretations have made it difficult for us to think of it in practical terms unless the law is revised or that interpretation is changed It is clear that we as a Government or as the Congress cannot put aside this abolition of zamindari which has been a main plank in our platform for many years Some way has to be found and that also speedily or else we shall be discredited and there will be legitimate complaint against us

38 There has been a good deal of wild talk amongst some Sikh leaders in East Punjab and elsewhere about Sikh rights²⁷ Claims are made which go completely counter to our declared policy and which are based entirely on an acceptance of communalism²⁸ We have said little on this subject because we wish to avoid needless public controversy and because *Government's position has been quite clear I should like to repeat here that on no account and whatever the consequences are we going to accept communalism in this shape in our Constitution or elsewhere It is a matter of deep regret to me that some Sikh leaders have become so completely irresponsible as to talk in the language of threat The Sikh community is a brave and gallant one forming an integral part of this India of ours In the past they have been grievously misled and they*

27 Master Tara Singh the leader of the Akali Dal had stated on 28 November that the Congress decision not to recognise religious minorities was nothing but an attack on the Sikhs very existence He added that though he favoured the process of negotiations he had, in the prevailing circumstances no choice but to resort to agitation

28 The Minority Committee of the East Punjab Legislature had demanded that the Constituent Assembly should provide for the Sikhs five per cent representation in the Union Legislature and the services two ministerial positions at the Centre with one minister of Cabinet rank 50% seats in the East Punjab legislature and the provincial services a Governor and the Chief Minister in the province by rotation recognition of the backward classes among the Sikhs as Scheduled Castes redemarcation of the constituencies in Punjab to give weightage to Sikhs recognition to Gurmukhi as the official language and exclusion of the Hindi speaking areas from East Punjab to form a separate province of the Punjabi speaking people

have suffered greatly because of this. This business of misleading them still continues and I fear that if it is not checked there will be trouble for them and for us. But on this question of principle in regard to introducing communalism in our constitutional structure there is going to be no compromise and no giving in on our part. That is exactly what led to Pakistan and all the trouble that followed. It is a strange irony of fate that there should be any person in India who now puts forward a claim that the old Muslim League used to put forward.

39 The language question has been the subject of great argument. I do not wish to deal with it in its larger aspects but one aspect I should like to stress. It should be the fundamental policy of the State to encourage primary education in the mother tongue of the child whatever it may be provided of course there are sufficient children to take advantage of this. This has little to do with what the State language or what the provincial languages are. For instance if there are a considerable number of Tamil children in Calcutta or Bombay they have a right to be given primary education in Tamil by the State. At a slightly later stage the official provincial or State language must of course be taught to them. But it would be wrong and against generally accepted principles that they should be forced to go through their primary education in a language which is alien for them. This may involve in great cities the State running its primary schools in a variety of languages. This can only be done with recognised Indian languages and when there are sufficient number of children who demand it. I think if this principle was understood some of our linguistic conflicts would cease. We may not be able to give effect to this principle straight off. Nevertheless it must be accepted as the only right method.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
23 December, 1948

My dear Premier

My letters to you are becoming rather irregular and I am writing to you today at an odd time. But if I am to blame a little may I say that some of the Premiers are to be blamed much more. They are not only irregular but some of the them do not write to me for months. I am writing to you today as I am leaving for Hyderabad and Mysore tomorrow. Also because certain important events have happened and I should like to draw your attention to them.

2 In the international field the Dutch action in Indonesia¹ has overshadowed for the moment other events. Though long expected the crudeness and suddenness with which it came, after assurances that no such attack was intended was surprising. As you perhaps know I had invited President Soekarno and Dr. Shahrir² to visit us here. We had indeed sent a special plane to bring them to Delhi and this plane was delayed for two days in Singapore because the Dutch authorities would not give the necessary facilities and clearances for going to Batavia. When the aircraft was allowed to reach Batavia the Dutch action had already begun and Jogjakarta was being occupied. After being held up for a day in Batavia the plane returned empty.

1 On 18 December 1948 Dutch forces captured Jogjakarta capital of the Indonesian Republic and on the following day Soekarno Hatta Shahrir and many other Republican leaders were interned.

2 Sultan Shahrir (1909-1966) Indonesian nationalist leader exiled by the Dutch in 1934 headed Republican Government thrice between November 1945 and June 1947 in prison for three years from 1962 died in exile.

23 December, 1948

3 Ever since the beginning of October we have been energetically addressing the U S A and the U K Governments as well as other Governments on the subject of Indonesia. We have kept the Dutch Ambassador in Delhi also informed of our views. During my stay in London and Paris I pointed out forcibly the grave danger of the Dutch indulging in military action. There was general agreement that this should be prevented and I know that a good deal of pressure was brought to bear upon the Netherlands Government in this matter. I think it may be said that India's insistence and persistence produced definite results and probably delayed this military action.

4 On the 13th December we sent a final warning to various Governments and more specially pointed out to the U S A and the U K that if the Dutch attacked the Indonesian Republic part of the blame would inevitably be attached to these Governments. The Netherlands Government were members of the Western Union and were receiving money from the European Recovery Programme (Marshall Aid).³ It would be said that this Marshall Aid money was being utilised for Dutch imperialist ventures in Indonesia. The Western Union would suffer a grave blow in prestige and opinions throughout Asia would turn away from the Western Union and the policies that U S A and the U K stood for. Our messages undoubtedly produced a powerful effect.

5 Immediately on learning of the Dutch attack on Jogjakarta we communicated with various Governments⁴ and indicated to them that we took a very serious view of this happening and intended withdrawing our Consul General from

3 Proposed by George C. Marshall United States Secretary of State in June 1947 and implemented in 1948 the Marshall Plan or the European Recovery Programme was a joint effort by the United States and several West European countries to foster European economic recovery after the Second World War.

4 On 20 December 1948

Batavia and asking the Dutch Ambassador to leave New Delhi Our own Ambassador to be for The Hague had not gone yet and had been asked to delay his departure

6 The immediate step that we are taking is to stop KLM (Dutch Airlines) flights across India⁵ We have been in contact with Pakistan and they are taking similar action We have also specially asked Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Afghanistan, Iran and Egypt also to deny facilities to the Dutch Airlines The most important country in this respect is Ceylon

7 Meanwhile, the matter has come up before the Security Council and we have been informed by the U S A Government that they are going to take up a strong line against the Dutch⁶ They have expressed their general agreement with what we had said to them and are stopping Marshall Aid for the Netherlands East Indies⁷ As I am dictating this I do not know what the Security Council is going to do You will no doubt know of it by the time this letter reaches you⁸

8 This Dutch action will bring a great deal of misery on large numbers of people From one point of view however, it is perhaps a good thing that it has taken place in this particular way It has brought to the fore the whole question of European imperialism in parts of Asia I am quite sure that the Dutch will have to retire from Indonesia sooner or later That retirement would have been gradual if they had been wiser and had come

5 From 23 December 1948

6 On 20 December the Security Council took up for consideration the U N Good Offices Committee's report from Batavia which described the Dutch action as repudiation of the Renville truce signed on 17 January The United States representative in support of the Republicans stated on 22 December that U S fails to find any justification for the Dutch action

7 Suspended on 22 December 1948

8 The resolution sponsored by the U S calling for a cease fire in Indonesia and release of all prisoners was passed in the Security Council on 28 December

23 December, 1948

to terms with the Indonesian Republic No one need imagine that the Dutch are going to have an easy conquest

9 In China the course of Communist victories continues and it appears only a question of time and not a long time when a great part of China will be under the Communist government The Chinese Communists appear to pursue a line of their own to some extent and do not blindly imitate the Soviet Communists They have made it known that they will have a coalition government containing even members of the Kuomintang Probably their policy to begin with at least will be restrained Their top leaders are very able men But whatever the form of government it will undoubtedly be dominated by the communist elements

10 A session of the E C A F E was held recently in Australia and after much argument and debate and opposition Indonesia was admitted as an associate member The E C A F E continues to pass fairly good resolutions but little is actually done by it partly because the U S A are not providing either machinery or dollar exchange for the industrial rehabilitation of Eastern countries⁹ They are concentrating on giving help to Europe The habit of ignoring Asia still continues But now with the developments in Indonesia there has been a rude shock

11 An Inter Dominion Conference between India and Pakistan was held recently in Delhi This conference achieved some substantial results¹⁰ I think we should not minimise the

⁹ E C A F E's master plan for reconstruction in Asia with an outlay of \$13 600 million had been shelved due to lack of funds The United States delegate expressed his inability to give any undertaking on behalf of his Government about their contribution to the proposed plan

¹⁰ The conference reached decisions on issues like protection of life and property of the minority communities boundary disputes evacuee property insurance policies and museums and stores Both sides also agreed to urge their media not to indulge in a propaganda of hate and fear but stimulate hope and confidence among the minorities so that mass exodus was discouraged and the evacuees could also return to their homes

achievements of the conference. There is unfortunately a tendency on the part of newspapers to minimise the work of such conferences and to express their utter lack of faith in anything effective being done. One should not expect too much from anything, but I think it is true that the last conference did take some substantial steps forward.

12 The position in East Bengal continues to be tense, though the actual flow of refugees has gone down greatly. It is hoped that with the new decisions of the Inter Dominion Conference, there will be even less tendency for Hindus to leave East Bengal. But ultimately this will depend on the proper implementation of the decisions by Pakistan especially.

13 A part of the Kashmir Commission of the United Nations has come back to Delhi and we have been conferring with them for the last three days. They have brought some fresh proposals which are in the nature of an addendum to their August resolution.¹¹ We have given the most careful thought to this as we are anxious to have a peaceful settlement.

14 Pakistan armies made a concentrated attack by heavy bombardment on one of our important bridges in the Jammu area. This is at Beri Pattan. This attack went against the spirit of assurances given and it was clearly the result of some months of building up. This building up could not take place except with the help and advice of the Britisher Commander in Chief in Pakistan¹² as well as other British officers civil and military.¹³ We have asked the U.K. Government to withdraw

11 On 11 December 1948 the U.N. Commission submitted supplementary proposals for a free and impartial plebiscite in Kashmir state after its earlier resolution of 15 August 1948 had been acted upon. The Commission called upon both sides immediately to cease fire and agree to the truce terms.

12 General Sir Douglas Gracey (1894-1964).

13 Lieut. General R.C. MacCay (1895-1969) was the Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army at this time and Major General R.A. Hutton was the Chief of General Staff.

these British officers who are playing such an important part in Pakistan affairs ¹⁴

15 In India as you know the Congress has met at Jaipur after a long interval. It was a successful session in many ways and yet it is clear that we cannot have these big *melas* in future

16 From the 15th January there will be an Indian Commander in Chief of our Army. We have selected Lt. General Cariappa ¹⁵. A new Minister of State Shri R.R. Diwakar ¹⁶ has been appointed and has taken charge of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry. Shri B. V. Keskar ¹⁷ has been appointed Deputy Minister and is working in the Foreign Ministry.

17 The R. S. S. movement and satyagraha has been going on for some time and you have had your own share of it in your province. It is clear that this type of intense communalism cannot be permitted to poison our national life and we have to take strong steps against it. No government can be absolutely uncompromising where its own citizens are concerned. It tries or should try to win over as many people as possible to its own side. Nevertheless it is always a dangerous thing to compro-

with something that is definitely evil. The R S S movement is directly aimed at everything that nationalist India has stood for, and in the name of advocating Indian culture, it has developed a mentality of the narrowest and the most unscrupulous kind. Its methods are secret. It must, therefore, be clearly understood that our Government cannot compromise on this vital issue.

18 In this connection, it is well to remember and to give every publicity to the resolutions adopted by the National Congress at Jaipur. These resolutions embody the general policy of the Congress in regard to domestic and foreign affairs.¹⁸ The ideal we aim at is essentially one which Gandhiji placed before us. We have frequently fallen away from that ideal and many of us have been led astray both in the larger political field and in the narrow field of personal conduct. The Congress has called upon us to pull ourselves up. The Congress cannot, in the nature of things, become a narrow communal organisation. If it does not succeed in maintaining generally its previous objectives and ideals, then it falls between two stools and gradually perishes. Therefore, in our minds and in our actions, both as Government and as individuals, we have to be dead clear about these ideals and objectives and not compromise with them. The R S S agitation has served a good purpose in waking us to our true duty.

19 The Congress dealt with many important subjects, including the economic policy and programme. But it did not deal specifically with the peculiar and distressing economic situation that we have to face, and which is stunting our activity.

18 The Congress resolutions reaffirmed support of Government's basic policy in relation to colonialism, power blocs, nationalist movements in neighbouring countries and foreign possessions in India. The Congress also expressed faith in Government's economic policy and its resolve to establish a secular State based on principles of equality and justice to all irrespective of caste, class and creed.

23 December, 1948

and growth. Perhaps the subject was too difficult and intricate for a full session of the Congress to consider it and it was well known that the Government was giving every thought to it. Nevertheless it is true that the situation is a bad one and there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in the country and considerable distress more specially among the lower paid employees and workers. They are now hard hit by the high price level and demand the fulfilment of our undertaking to raise the dearness allowance in keeping with the rising prices. Logically their demand has some strength. But it seems clear that we cannot go far in this direction not only because of our present financial position but also because of the effect on inflation. There are some signs of improvement in the situation. But the process is slow. We have to remain vigilant and do our utmost to speed this process.

20 Cloth control has not succeeded thus far to any large extent. The policy seems to be right enough but the implementation of it has been slow in coming. This has to be expedited and provincial governments should help in every way. Large stocks of cloth have accumulated in many places owing to the delay in taking delivery by provincial governments.

21 There is thus a considerable congestion of cloth at production centres primarily on account of the failure of provincial nominees to purchase and take delivery of stocks allocated to them by the Textile Commissioner. Hold ups due to transport are not at present serious. If these accumulations continue the effect on the situation in the mills will be considerable. In this matter the provincial governments have a special responsibility and opportunity and I earnestly trust that your government will take energetic and speedy steps to remove the bottleneck.

22 I am greatly distressed by the discontent among large sections of industrial workers. This distress is partly due directly

to high prices and partly to a psychological feeling that the burden of the crisis is chiefly laid on the workers and the higher rank of government employees are getting very high salaries and periodical increments. We should try to remove this sense of injustice and do what we can to relieve the burden of our lower paid employees. We should not treat any large section of the working class as enemies of the nation or the community. We have to win it over to our side and gain its cooperation.

23 You will have noticed that the salary of the Governor General is being reduced to Rs 5 500/ per month free of taxation.

24 We are considering the setting up of a Central Statistical Organisation. A proper system of collecting statistics and coordinating them has become essential for us. In this work also provincial governments have a large part to play.

25 This year which has been so difficult for most of us is drawing to a close. The next year is not going to be an easy one but I hope and to some extent believe that the next year will bring us much nearer to the solution of some of our major problems.

26 I should like to wish you—not a happy New Year which is rather banal—but a New Year of hard and successful work leading to some advance towards our objectives.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 January 1949

My dear Premier

I am writing this to you immediately after the beginning of the New Year. The year that is just over has been a very difficult one for us and we are very far indeed from having solved our problems. We carry them on to the New Year but I think I am right in saying that this New Year holds promise of advance and improvement. I wish you and your colleagues all good fortune and success in your service of India.

2 Before you get this letter you will learn of two major events. One is the ceasefire in Kashmir.¹ Some ten days ago we agreed to the U.N. Kashmir Commission's latest proposals.² These proposals were a repetition of their resolution of August last that is to say that there should be a ceasefire and truce and that Pakistan Armies should withdraw completely from Kashmir state. We were then asked to reduce our forces in the state subject to security reasons and protection from external aggression or internal disorder. We had accepted this resolution then and Pakistan had rejected it. The last part of the resolution—Part III—said that when Parts I and II had been implemented we would consider how to find out the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

1 Fighting in Kashmir ended at midnight on 12 January 1949.

2 See *note* p. 250. The Commission announced its new proposals on 5 January.

3 The latest proposals reaffirm this resolution and added general principles for a plebiscite if and when it occurred. Ultimately we agreed to these proposals after full elucidation. Pakistan also accepted them. So it appeared certain that the Security Council would confirm these proposals and that we would have a ceasefire. If this was so, then it seemed to us that there was no point in continuing the operations and killing people. So on the 30th December we asked Pakistan if they would agree to a ceasefire. They agreed and some details are being settled.

4 After the ceasefire and truce, the first step that has to be taken is the withdrawal of all Pakistan Armies and auxiliaries from Kashmir state. The war in Kashmir is thus ended or suspended after fifteen months. That is a major event for us and for others and perhaps a good omen for the New Year. I would repeat that there are innumerable difficulties and hurdles still.

5 The Dutch attack on Indonesia has been fantastic and there is not a shadow of excuse for it. The Security Council has tried to avoid deciding anything for the moment.³ We have been in constant touch with the U.S.A. and the U.K. and various Asian Governments in regard to Indonesia and we have brought strong pressure to bear on these Governments. Owing to the delay of the Security Council in dealing with this matter, we decided to convene a conference in New Delhi at ministerial level of representatives of the Asian countries plus Egypt and Turkey.⁴ There is an almost unanimity of opinion among Asian countries over this issue, although it is possible that some of them may not join us in any step that we might take.

³ Speaking at Allahabad on 1 January, Nehru described the U.N. Security Council resolutions of 24 and 28 December 1948 as weak and inadequate. The resolutions had called for ceasefire and release of all Republican leaders only. Nehru demanded withdrawal of all Dutch forces, sanctions against any aid to the Dutch, and the creation of conditions for transfer of power to the Indonesians.

⁴ Held from 20 to 23 January 1949.

1 January 1949

6 The economic situation does not appear to improve and is more or less static. We must watch it carefully. The Central Cabinet is going to review the situation again in about a week's time.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

information has to come from the provinces I would therefore request you to supply this information at the earliest possible moment. It is not enough to say vaguely how money has been utilised. We want to know what results have been produced and by what methods. Each method must be tested by results and it must be given up immediately if results are lacking.

We may have to revise completely our Grow More Food policy if we are not satisfied that it is yielding substantial results.

Food production has to be analysed in its various aspects. I am told that in some parts wheat cultivation is giving place to sugarcane because the latter is more remunerative.³ This aspect has to be examined. So also other similar developments. We hope to set up an adequate machinery for testing and checking all this. In this we shall require your fullest cooperation and help.

In regard to industrial output also the same policy must be pursued and exact data provided. On the basis of that data we shall frame our policy and emphasise these aspects of our programme which are likely to yield fairly rapid results.

The short term programme is of the highest importance and must be given precedence so as to encourage production in the immediate future both of foodstuffs and industrial products. At the same time selected long term projects have also to be proceeded with. In both the cases a close watch has to be kept and data supplied at short intervals. I shall be grateful if you will kindly help us in getting this information which should be sent to the appropriate Ministry.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

³ For instance in U P the total area under sugarcane cultivation rose to 10.24 lakh acres in 1947-48 and the cane crushed during the year was 62.56 lakh tons as compared to 54.16 lakh tons the previous year. The cane crushing season was also prolonged to 114 working days as against an average of 75 days in the past few years.

New Delhi
7 January, 1949

My dear Premier *

We have been considering for some time past the inflationary situation that exists in the country and we have proclaimed that we will fight it to the best of our ability. Thus far the results have been not very startling though prices have not gone up. But obviously they have to come down before any relief can come. This matter as well as allied matters require the most constant and vigilant attention and it may be necessary for us to take other steps. The Cabinet here is giving this matter the most earnest attention and would welcome any particular suggestion from you after your experience of the last three months or so.

Another aspect of the economic situation and a most vital aspect is the lack of dollars which we need so much.¹ This is creating a serious situation. This lack of dollars is chiefly due to food imports.²

The position in regard to food has been and is highly unsatisfactory. It is not at all clear what our loudly advertised Grow More Food Campaign is producing. The first thing to be done is to have the most accurate data in regard to it. We have asked our Food Ministry to provide this data. But obviously the

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 Between April and December 1948 India had a deficit of \$ 93 million in her balance of payments with hard currency countries. Of these the purchase of foodgrains accounted for \$ 75 million.

2 India imported during 1948 2.8 million tons of foodgrains involving an expenditure of Rs. 130 crores.

2 In China the collapse of the Nationalist forces has been rapid and it is quite possible that the Nationalist Government might have to withdraw to South China. This means the establishment of a communist or a communist dominated regime over a great part of North China. Probably there will be a lull in actual fighting then to enable the communist regime to consolidate its position. Both in North and South China and more especially in the North the civil war has brought much havoc and it will take some time before any kind of stability is visible. Of course the return of stability may be hindered by a continuation of war. Probably war will continue in theory though it may be moderated in practice.

3 The victory of the Communists in China has far reaching consequences not only to that great country but also to Asia as a whole and to the world. It is a little difficult to assess these consequences. Opinions vary. Some people think that this regime will be hundred per cent communist others think that it will be a balance between communism and the Chinese temperament and genius. The Chinese never lose their essential characteristics and patterns of living and thought. Probably in the long perspective this Chinese pattern may maintain itself and it may be that a special Chinese type of communism might be evolved.

4 As China is in a state of acute disintegration there is no danger of any aggression on the part of Communist China on any adjoining country for a considerable time to come. What is likely to happen is that Communist parties in other countries will be greatly encouraged by the success of the Chinese Communists. It is likely that a Communist Government in China to begin with will be some kind of a coalition government which will function rather moderately and avoid any act which will bring it into trouble with other powers. Their general foreign policy however is likely to be in line with Soviet policy. This will affect Korea more especially.

New Delhi
17 January 1949

My dear Premier

International affairs have been rather dominated recently by two events the successes of the Communist armies in China and the Dutch action in Indonesia. There was also a flare up in Palestine when five British aircraft were shot down by the Israel army and this produced a very tense situation.¹ The immediate crisis in Palestine² is past and some kind of negotiations are taking place between the Arabs and the Jews.³ The U K was placed in a very difficult position by recent developments in Palestine and Egypt more especially as the U S S R are openly siding with Israel.⁴ Palestine thus becomes another field of conflict between the great powers

1 The incident took place on 7 January 1949

2 Disagreement between Israel and Egypt on the former's claim over the Nageb area in Palestine as per the U N General Assembly resolution of 29 November 1947 led to heavy fighting between them from 23 December to 7 January 1949

3 Agreements for ceasefire and armistice were signed between Israel and the Arab countries between February and July 1949

4 During the Security Council debates while Britain supported the Bernadotte plan to exchange Nageb for Western Galilee the United States and the Soviet Union supported Israel. The Soviet Union at this time extended support to Israel by giving it massive military aid through Czechoslovakia and diplomatically supporting it in the United Nations. This was to counter the British attempt at winning over the Arabs and also to deprive them of the facilities of the all weather port of Haifa and bases in the Nageb desert

8 The action we have taken on Indonesia has made it perfectly clear that our foreign policy is independent of every other country. That of course does not mean that we function in isolation and in opposition to others. It does mean that even though we are still members of the Commonwealth of Nations we can and do function as we want to. People who have criticised the possibility of our having some future relationship with the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth must realise now that even if there is such a relationship it cannot affect our foreign policy. That would not mean our lining up with any particular group of nations.

9 The line that India has taken in regard to Indonesia and the summoning of the Asian Conference have compelled other countries to wake up to the dangers flowing from Dutch aggression. They have realised that if this type of aggression is allowed to go unchallenged there will be catastrophe on a vast scale. I am writing to you on the eve of the Asian Conference and delegates from the countries invited are already arriving. Every country that was invited has accepted our invitation and is sending over a delegate or an observer. The only country that was unable to do so is Turkey. They expressed their inability to join the conference but assured us of their complete sympathy with the line we had adopted in regard to Indonesia. The Security Council is at present meeting at Lake Success. I do not know what their final decisions will be regarding Indonesia. But undoubtedly they have realised that they cannot submit tamely to what the Dutch have done there.

10 Apart from the immediate objective in view the Asian Conference is a historic and unique occasion bringing a large number of Asian Governments together. No doubt this will lead to a closer understanding of each other and to future possibilities of cooperation in many fields. We have made it clear that neither this conference nor any other kind of

5 The developments in China are having and will continue to have powerful reactions on the world situation though nothing obvious may happen for some time. In a sense the precarious balance of power is affected and the U K U S A and other like countries have to face new problems in a new context. India rather suddenly and inevitably becomes the most important country of Asia apart from the Soviet North. Relatively therefore the importance of India in world affairs has increased and all eyes are turned upon her.

6 The part that India has taken in regard to Indonesia and the summoning of the Asian Conference in New Delhi have further drawn world attention to India's role in international affairs and more especially in Asia. It is being increasingly realised that Asia has been ignored by the world powers in the past and now they are suffering for this neglect. In thinking of Asia they now think of India and of the line India may or may not take. Thus a great burden and responsibility is cast upon India. We have proclaimed repeatedly and deliberately that India does not seek any leadership of Asia or of any other group but facts and circumstances are compelling India to play an important role in these developing world events. This requires careful thought and a balanced judgment.

7 Sometimes individuals and newspapers talk rather wildly of India standing forth bravely as a crusader to protect Asia. A great country has to act quietly and with strength and not in an agitational manner and with threats to other countries. Apart from the impropriety of such behaviour it would not be in accordance with facts and with the capacity of India today to take effective action. We have therefore to proceed with a certain caution and deliberation and at the same time to adhere to the principles we stand for.

go counter to the interests of the Africans. That is the only right and safe policy for us in foreign countries, more especially in Africa, and it is a matter of deep sorrow to me that this racial conflict should have taken place in Durban. We have not got all the facts yet and we are enquiring.

13 You will have noticed a number of statements in the press about the Kashmir ceasefire and proposals for a plebiscite. Only today Pakistan came out with a long statement which is very tendentious and misleading.⁷ What we have agreed to with the Commission is clearly stated not only in the Commission's proposals but in the two *aides memoire* which has been published.⁸ These *aides memoire* were accepted by the Commission and were given to the Pakistan Government in December last. It is surprising that Pakistan should try to challenge this at this stage by publishing a long and misleading statement. It must be remembered that our acceptance is entirely based on what we have stated in our *aides memoire*, and the Commission have completely agreed to this. We are not going back on this. We have made it clear that the 'Azad Kashmir' troops have to be disbanded and disarmed. Further

7 Pakistan asserted that the U.N. Commission's resolution did not envisage disbandment of the Azad Kashmir forces and the Azad Kashmir Government acting as the local authority would help the Commission in arranging a plebiscite and the repatriation of refugees. She also demanded that the forces of Pakistan and India in Kashmir should withdraw at the same time.

8 The *aides memoire* published by the Government of India on 13 January 1949 set forth the substance of discussions with the representative of the U.N. Commission, Dr. A. Lozano, on 20 and 22 December 1948. According to these the Indian Government was assured that the new proposals of the Commission would be implemented after Pakistan implemented the Commission's August resolution: the plebiscite administrator would not interfere in the normal administration of the state and would function only after withdrawal of forces. 'Azad Kashmir' forces would be disarmed, no political activity of a communal nature would be allowed and entry and exit of persons from the state be regulated by permits. The Commission also agreed that Pakistan forces would withdraw first and that the plebiscite administrator would explore alternatives for a plebiscite if need be.

cooperation is conceived in any spirit of hostility to other countries or groups⁵ This is not a diplomatic statement to get over possible difficulties but represents what we honestly think is good for India, for Asia, and the world

11 We have not invited the U K U S A , or the U S S R to this conference although all of them are greatly interested in Indonesia To have invited them all would have meant making this a miniature U N Assembly with the same conflicts and arguments Apart from this, these great powers are dealing with the matter in the Security Council and it was difficult for them to function both there and in this conference at this particular moment without embarrassment to various parties concerned *The conference is not intended to bypass the Security Council in any way but rather to help it and to impress upon it the strength of our feeling in the matter*

12 The recent terrible racial riots in Durban in South Africa are an awful reminder of racialism which South Africa has nurtured⁶ It is peculiarly distressing that Indians and Africans should come into conflict in this way We have emphasised for many years that we want full cooperation all over the continent of Africa between Indians and Africans and that we do not desire any privilege for Indians there or vested interests which

5 In a press statement at Calcutta on 13 January Nehru said I want to make it perfectly clear that there is no idea behind this conference of forming an Asian bloc as against European countries and America We have been opposed to joining any blocs for any hostile purposes We can hardly therefore think of encouraging the formation of a new bloc of nations. This conference is not opposed to any country or people It is not anti European or anti American or anti Western It is not a racial conference It is certainly opposed to the conception of imperialism and colonialism Secondly the conference is not intended in any way to weaken the United Nations but rather to strengthen them

6 In a statement in Parliament on 2 February 1949, Nehru said that among the killed were 53 Indians 83 Africans and one European The number of injured were 768 Indians 1085 Africans and 30 Europeans The riots resulted in the destruction of shops and houses owned by Indians

17 January, 1949

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that the Pakistan Commission, which is referred to in the proposals will not function in any part of Kashmir state territory Thirdly that while legitimate political propaganda will be given full scope we are not going to permit fanatical religious propaganda of any type and appeals to religious prejudice This is important as Pakistan and Azad Kashmir propaganda has been based on an exploitation of religion and the cry of jihad You will realise that there are still many hurdles in our way in Kashmir even after the ceasefire

14 We do not wish to enter into public controversy with the Pakistan Government on this issue at this stage but we have issued a brief statement clarifying the position⁹ The U N Kashmir Commission is expected to reach India by the end of this month

15 The Inter Dominion Conference at Karachi met with greater success than perhaps was expected¹⁰ This is a happy sign and it would bring I hope relief to large numbers of refugees In East Bengal the exodus to West Bengal has stopped¹¹ We hope that gradually there will be a reverse movement though this cannot be on a big scale Meanwhile of course it is our duty both in West Bengal and elsewhere to try our utmost to solve the problem of refugees by helping them and rehabilitating them

16 I have recently returned from Calcutta where I took part in an impressive and unique ceremony This was the reception

9 The statement pointed out the fallacies in the Pakistan Government's interpretation of the conditions for the truce and withdrawal of troops by both sides

10 The conference held from 10 to 13 January 1949 reached an agreement on the issues relating to evacuee property in both Dominions

11 According to the West Bengal Government 1 56 851 persons had migrated from East to West Bengal till 1 January 1949

to the Buddhist relics ¹² This ceremony was colourful and international with all the Buddhist countries well represented. It was gratifying to see all these nations of the Buddhist world looking to India not only with friendship but as the mother country from which their great religion originated. It was a home coming of many things the more important of which were those of the spirit.

17 The R S S movement has practically faded away though some arrests here and there continue. At no time did it rouse any public enthusiasm. It has represented extreme reaction and an immense limitation of vision. Its lack of success is a healthy sign for India. But we must not be over confident and allow this evil to remain.

18 My colleague, Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar the Railway Minister has had negotiations with the railwaymen ¹³ These negotiations were on the whole helpful but there is no certainty yet as to whether there will be a strike or not. It surprises me that in the present state of affairs in the country any responsible person should talk light heartedly of any strike much more so of a strike on the Railways which would do great injury to the country and its production. Ultimately it will injure the railwaymen even more than the others. The community generally will react very unfavourably to them. I earnestly trust that no one will encourage this kind of stabbing of India at a critical moment in our history.

19 The economic situation does not improve rapidly though there are some signs of improvement. The Finance Minister recently laid stress on stabilising prices first and then gradually trying to lower them¹⁴. His statement was to some extent misunderstood and it was thought by some people that he did not wish to lower prices¹⁵. What he said was that the first step is to check every tendency to inflation and rise in prices and thus to create conditions when a healthy and continuous lowering can take place. He spoke cautiously and with full deliberation so that he might not mislead anyone or raise false hopes. But the fact is of course that our whole object is to lower prices. I should like to draw your special attention to certain resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Congress in regard to the economic situation¹⁶. We have all to tighten our belts during this period. I have no doubt at all in my mind that economically India is basically sound and potentially strong. But for the moment we have to face certain difficulties among them being the necessity of importing large quantities of foodstuffs and the shortage of dollars with which to pay for them. We have to conserve our resources and avoid all waste. I hope that the next few months will show a definite trend for the better.

20 India is definitely marching ahead in many ways, but there are still many factors which tend to pull her back or impede her progress. But the general movement forward is becoming more and more apparent.

14 John Matthai at the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta on 13 December 1948.

15 Jayaprakash Narayan speaking in Ambala on 7 January 1949 argued that if the Government's intention was only to stabilize prices at the current level then the railwaymen's demand for increased allowance on the basis of the present cost of living was fully justified.

16 The Congress Working Committee's resolution of 10 January 1949 called for austerity and planned effort to increase production and ensure fair distribution.

21 In a letter from one of our Governors the following passage occurs All these Public Security Acts authorising arrest and detention without trial lead to a sense of frustration and outbreaks of violence I devoutly wish that normal conditions and with them ordinary processes of law should soon be restored so that Government might escape the odium of acting tyrannically by locking up people without reasonable cause I entirely agree with this and have frequently written to you about it

22 In less than two weeks a whole year will have passed since the Father of the Nation passed away We shall observe that day January 30 I hope in a prayerful spirit thinking of him and of his great ideals and dedicating ourselves to the cause for which he lived and for which he died

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
24 January, 1949

My dear Premier *

We had recently the conference on Indonesia which has been a great success and which has enhanced the prestige of India all over the world¹ We have also had an Inter Dominion Conference between India and Pakistan at Karachi which has also yielded substantial results and we are on the way to solving some of our conflicts with Pakistan

All this is to the good but just about this time various events have happened which have powerfully affected public opinion and caused a great deal of distress to people favourably inclined to our governments There has been the police firing in Calcutta² and in several provinces there has been for some time past a spate of legislation confining the liberties of the individual³

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 The Delhi Conference on Indonesia called upon the countries attending the conference to evolve a suitable machinery for mutual consultations and action which would also work in accord with the objectives of the United Nations

2 The police had opened fire on 18 19 January 1949 on student demonstrators protesting against the police action on refugees from East Bengal who were squatting near the Sealdah railway station in Calcutta when Nehru was to arrive

3 For example with the passing of the Madhya Bharat Public Safety Bill on 6 January 1949 the State Government was vested with wide powers to detain any person suspected of indulging in unlawful activity

All this is no doubt necessitated by events and by the action of some people who are bent on creating mischief. In Calcutta some kind of bombs were actually thrown on the police. I cannot judge of the peculiar circumstances in each case and only the provincial government can do so.

I am writing to you however to point out to you the damage that is being done to the reputation both of the Central Government and the provincial governments by these developments and a feeling that is growing that our governments rely far more on the repressive arm of the State than on other methods of dealing with a complicated situation. It is felt by many of our friends that we resort to arrests, detention, banning and police action far too readily and that we do not pay enough attention to the basic causes which produce this unrest and trouble. The real trouble makers are relatively few but when there is widespread unrest they can exploit it for their own purposes. Any conflict with government gives them a fresh stick to beat government with and excite public opinion against government.

I should like to draw your attention to these unfortunate developments because both in India and abroad our reputation is suffering.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
3 February, 1949

My dear Premier

The outstanding fact in the domestic sphere of the last fortnight was the observance of the first anniversary of Gandhiji's death. For a day at least the people of India raised themselves from the rut of their day to day politics and conflicts and thought of higher things. I earnestly trust that we shall continue to endeavour to keep up to that level of thought and action and live up to the advice in accordance with Gandhiji's message that so many of us from the Governor General downwards have given. I am quite convinced that even from the narrowest viewpoint of national self interest that is the only policy that will advance India's interests. It will certainly also raise India's prestige in the world and help in promoting world peace.

2 India played an important part on the world stage at the conference on Indonesia that was held in Delhi. This conference was viewed with apprehension in many capitals, as it indicated rather forcibly that India and Asia were going to function in international affairs independently and would no longer follow the lead of some of the great powers¹. The conference was a great success in every way and there can be no doubt that it has been of help to the cause of Indonesia. The

1 See ante p. 270

Security Council resolution inadequate as it is still follows the lead of the Delhi Conference on many matters ² It remains to be seen how far the Dutch are going to act up to this resolution. Probably they will not reject it outright and yet they will try to bypass it or ignore it. It is therefore necessary for us to be vigilant.

3 The freedom of Indonesia is important in itself and is further important because it affects the whole situation in South East Asia. It has become a test case and in a sense our whole future is tied up with it. On the one hand if as I hope by our and others actions Dutch imperialism is eliminated from Indonesia that will be a great victory for all those who are opposed to colonialism. If the Dutch with the passive consent or acquiescence of the principal powers manage to retain their imperialist hold over Indonesia then there will be complete disillusionment in regard to the Security Council and the United Nations and other forces will come into play. Even so the situation will not and cannot remain static. It is clear that the Dutch are having no easy time in Indonesia and will never be able to subdue the people there completely. The only way to peace lies in the withdrawal of the Dutch from any dominating role in Indonesia.

4 From the point of view of Asia this conference has been a turning point in history. This fact is well recognised by competent observers all over the world. It means new alignments and a new balance of power if not now then in the

² The Delhi Conference had recommended to the Security Council on 24 January an eight point plan which envisaged withdrawal of all Dutch forces and complete freedom to the interim government in defence and external affairs. These recommendations did not form a part of the Security Council's resolution of 28 January. The resolution however did call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, release of and freedom of action to the Republican leaders in the Jogjakarta area and setting up of a U.N. Commission to assist in establishing an interim government and holding elections to the Constituent Assembly prior to the transfer of power to be effected by 1 January 1950 as recommended by the Delhi Conference.

near future. We have stated repeatedly that we do not want to form a new bloc of nations or to range ourselves against any existing bloc. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that as a result of this conference and other causes, the countries of Asia will come closer together and that India will play a leading part in this. This brings to India new responsibilities.

5 The situation in Burma has been a deteriorating one. The principal opponents of the Burmese Government are not now the Communists, but the Karens, who want a separate state.³ The Communists are, however, still playing an important role and will no doubt profit if any change in government takes place. Owing to the serious military situation in Burma, the delegation headed by the Congress President which was to have gone to Burma, has been stopped at the last moment at the request of the Burma Government.

6 In China, major changes are taking place and there is no doubt that within a short time the government of a great part of China will be Communist dominated. It appears that a part of the old National Government is establishing itself at Canton. We have given serious thought to these developments and have decided, in common with other interested powers, that for the present, our Ambassador will continue to stay at Nanking. But we are sending a senior officer of consular status to Canton. These are temporary measures, and our subsequent steps will depend on the developments that take place. In this matter, we are acting in line with most other powers.

7 The question of the recognition of the new State of Israel has been fully considered by us, more especially after the

3 On 27 January 1949, the Karens, a group of people speaking a Sino-Tibetan language and settled in eastern and southern Burma, and who were demanding autonomy, rose in arms and seized Bassein, the principal port of the Irrawaddy delta, and Toungon, the rail-road connection between Rangoon and central Burma. On 31 January, the Karens also seized the town of Insein on the outskirts of Rangoon.

recognition given to it by the U K Government and some other Governments ⁴ Any action that we may take must be guided not only by idealistic considerations but also a realistic appraisal of the situation Our general policy in the past has been favourable to the Arabs and at the same time not hostile to the Jews That policy continues For the present we have said that we are not recognising Israel ⁵ But this is not an irrevocable decision and the matter will no doubt be considered afresh in view of subsequent developments including the final decision of the United Nations

8 The riots in Durban have been a painful reminder of the difficulties of the situation in South Africa ⁶ In view of the judicial enquiry that is going to be held there it is not proper for us to come to any conclusions But it is stated that there was a good deal of instigation for these riots and the racial policy of the Union Government is itself partly responsible Nevertheless it must be remembered that no amount of incitement would lead to such riots unless there was some basic ill will between the Africans and Indians in South Africa The fundamental problem then is how to remove this ill will It has been our definite policy to encourage cooperation between Indians and Africans all over the continent of Africa Further that no Indian vested interests or monopolies should come in the way of the advancement of the African peoples in their homelands We have emphasised this again There is little doubt that there is a feeling among some Africans that Indian monopolies come in the way of their growth

9 Whatever the immediate future may be in Africa it is clear that the whole continent of Africa has got a big future and changes will take place there fairly rapidly Those changes will be governed by the new political consciousness of the African

4 On 29 January 1949

5 This was communicated to the British Government on 1 February 1949

6 See ante pp 264 65

people. We welcome this new consciousness and wish to cooperate with it. You may remember that we gave some scholarships in India to a number of young African students two years ago. Unless Indian residents of Africa can pull on with the Africans and cooperate with them, they will have little place there.

10 In Malaya, the situation is unsatisfactory from the Indian point of view.⁷ Indian labour there has not had a square deal at any time and even in the recent disturbances there they have suffered although they have taken very little part. We have drawn the attention of the U.K. Colonial Office to this matter.

11 The question of the nationality of Indians abroad is giving us some trouble. It is a complex question which can only be finally decided after the Constituent Assembly has laid down what constitutes Indian nationality and how it can be acquired. Indians abroad have first of all to decide whether they wish to adopt the nationality of the country they are in or to retain their Indian nationality. They cannot have it both ways. If the former, they lose political rights as Indians and gain citizenship rights in the country they live in. This applies chiefly to countries like Burma and Ceylon. In Ceylon, as you know, there has been no satisfactory understanding between us and the Ceylon Government on this issue.⁸

12 In the British colonies there are many Indians still. Their status as British subjects has been a vague one thus far. It has to be clarified soon. If India retains any kind of vague connection with the Commonwealth of Nations, then it should

7 The Malayan Indian delegate attending the Jaipur Congress had complained of the deteriorating labour conditions marked by increasing violence in Malaya. He said that under the Essential (Special Emergency) Regulations, 1948, labour could be evicted from the plantation fields without notice and a number of Indian labour leaders had been branded as Communists by the British authorities and deported to India.

8 See *ante* p. 236.

not be difficult for these Indians in British colonies to fit in the scheme of things without ceasing to be Indians. Otherwise they will have to choose finally between the two nationalities.

13 Then there is another question. Are Indians abroad who do not choose to become nationals of the country they are living in to be considered as Indian nationals or Pakistan nationals? If their original homeland is taken into consideration this would afford a test. But owing to large migrations this is not a satisfactory test. For instance of the Indians (Hindus) who originally lived in Pakistan and then settled down in Burma many want to become Indian nationals. As they have no home left in Pakistan and they have no present home in India it is a little difficult to fit them in under any nationality clause. For the present we have directed our representatives abroad to treat everyone Hindu or Muslim or belonging to any other religion as an Indian national if he expresses his desire to be so treated. This is subject to any such person not acting contrary to Indian interests. Probably some transitory provision might be made on these lines in our future definition of nationality.

14 In any event it must be clearly borne in mind that Indians abroad have to live on terms of full cooperation with the people of the country they live in. This is not only a good principle in keeping with our general policy but is also inevitable in the circumstances.

15 While our general relations with the Pakistan Government have on the whole improved events happen from time to time which are distressing. One of these recent happenings was the desecration and looting of the big Hanuman temple in Karachi.⁹ The activities of the Muslim League National Guards have also been sometimes very reprehensible. It is satisfactory to find however that the exodus of Hindus from Eastern Pakistan has practically stopped.

⁹ The famous Panchmukhi Hanuman temple was looted by the Muslim National Guards on 14 January 1949.

16 You will have noticed that our High Commissioner in Pakistan, Shri Sri Prakasa,¹⁰ has been appointed Governor of Assam. As High Commissioner, he held one of our most difficult diplomatic posts. He held this with dignity and success. We have not yet nominated his successor in Karachi.¹¹

17 The politics of West Punjab have been in a curious state of upset for a long time and have led the Pakistan Government to a dismissal of the Ministry and the application of Section 92 A.¹² Even in the North West Frontier Province¹³ and Sind,¹⁴ similar difficulties are in evidence. The democratic form of government has not been a remarkable success in Pakistan and gradually authoritarianism is being established. In the Frontier Province conditions have been distressing for a long time and the Khudai Khidmatgars or the Red Shirts¹⁵ have been suppressed and sought to be completely crushed. The tribal

10 (1890-1971) Prominent Congressman from U.P. India's High Commissioner to Pakistan 1947-49. Governor of Assam 1949-50. Union Minister of Commerce 1950-51 and of Natural Resources and Scientific Research 1951-52. Governor of Madras 1952-56 and Maharashtra 1956-62.

11 Later Sita Ram (1885-1972) educationist and politician from U.P. was chosen.

12 On 25 January 1949, after some Ministers of the West Punjab Government had resigned demanding an enquiry into charges of corruption and maladministration against the Premier, Khan Iftikhar Hussain Khan, Sir Francis Mudie, the Governor, took over the administration of the province and ordered fresh elections to the legislative assembly.

13 On 22 August 1947, the elected Ministry headed by Dr. Khan Sahib was arbitrarily dismissed and replaced by a Muslim League Ministry. This was followed by the arrests of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib in June and September 1948 and the declaration of Khudai Khidmatgars as an unlawful body.

14 Yusuf Abdoolah Haroon, though not a member of the Sind Assembly, was appointed the Premier of Sind after Pir Ilahi Bux, who was disenfranchised by the election tribunal, resigned.

15 Founded in 1929 by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Khudai Khidmatgars or the Servants of God, also known as the Red Shirts, had been active in N.W.F.P. against British rule.

areas have their problems unsolved ¹⁶ You may remember that last year there was a good deal of bombing from the air of the tribal areas by the Pakistan Air Force. It is a matter of great distress for us that some of our old and valued colleagues like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan ¹⁷ and Dr Khan Sahib ¹⁸ have, from such reports as reach us, been treated in a very bad way. Fantastic reports have appeared in Pakistan newspapers of our sending large sums of money to them as well as to the tribal people. These reports are completely false. We have, in fact, had no contacts with any of these people ever since the partition.

18 The Pakistan Government and the so called Azad Kashmir Government have been carrying on a great deal of propaganda in regard to Kashmir. They are obviously greatly agitated as to what might happen there and have deputed one of their Central Ministers, Mr Gurmani ¹⁹ to prepare for a possible plebiscite. Other Ministers of the Pakistan Government, including their Prime Minister, have visited those areas of Kashmir which are in the possession of Pakistan troops. The general line has been to try to interpret the decisions of the U.N. Kashmir Commission in a manner favourable to them. As

16 In the tribal areas in the north and west of Pakistan, some *jirgas* refused to acknowledge the Pakistan Government's authority, demanded an independent Pakhtoonistan state and protested strongly against the arrest of the Khan brothers.

17 (b. 1891) Congress leader of the N.W.F.P., founded the Red Shirt volunteer organisation in 1929, in prison on a charge of sedition from 1948 to 1955.

18 (1882-1958) Brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Chief Minister of Congress ministries in N.W.F.P. 1937-39 and 1945-47, detained by the Pakistan Government 1948 to 1953. Minister of Communications 1954-55. Chief Minister of West Pakistan 1955-57, assassinated on 9 May 1958.

19 Nawab Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani (1905-1981) Prime Minister Bahawalpur state 1947-48. Minister for Kashmir Affairs 1949-51 and for Home Affairs, States and Frontier Regions 1951-54. Governor of Punjab 1954-55 and of West Pakistan 1955-57.

a matter of fact what has been said on behalf of Pakistan in this regard has been completely wide of the mark and contrary to the decisions and arrangements arrived at. We have preferred not to enter into public controversy, as not only this was unbecoming but also because the Kashmir Commission is arriving here soon. Our position is stated clearly in the resolutions of the U N Commission²⁰ and, in the aides memoire²¹ and letters which we wrote to the Commission, and which they accepted as correct. All these have been published in the press. But in order to facilitate reference to them, I am sending you separately a paper issued by the Ministry of External Affairs containing recent documents regarding Kashmir.

19 The U N Commission is expected here very soon and they will no doubt clarify the position. We do not propose to vary the position we have already taken up in any way. It is possible that this may give rise to certain difficulties so far as Pakistan is concerned and we shall have to face them.

20 I would add that while the Kashmir problem in its various political and economic and other aspects is a difficult one there is absolutely no need for any apprehension and anxiety in regard to it. I was astonished to read certain statements made by Shri Sarat Bose²² in regard to Kashmir²³. These indicated a height of irresponsibility which is surprising from any person conversant with politics. Factually, they were not correct and the only result that followed from them was to

20 See ante p 250

21 See ante p 265

22 (1889-1950) Elder brother of Subhas Chandra Bose, barrister and leading Congressman from Bengal, resigned from the Congress and formed the Socialist Republican Party in November 1946, member West Bengal Legislative Assembly 1949-50.

23 On 18 January Bose had described the reference of the Kashmir question to the United Nations as a blunder. He also asserted that if a plebiscite took place, Kashmir would opt for Pakistan.

3 February, 1949

give Pakistan material for propaganda which they eagerly seized

21 In regard to certain other statements made by Shri Sarat Bose, notably his strong denunciation of some of our foreign missions and establishments,²⁴ I would also say that they are factually incorrect in many particulars and very irresponsible. One would have thought that Shri Sarat Bose would have taken the trouble to find out the facts from responsible persons before giving publicity to his own opinions. He did no such thing and hastened immediately after his return to India to give press conferences and the like, containing a host of mis statements

22 As you know, the R S S movement has been unconditionally withdrawn.²⁵ The Home Minister has discussed future policy in regard to the R S S with Premiers. There is a spate of rumours published in the press which has little justification in fact. Naturally we are anxious that our young men and students who have been misguided enough to participate in this movement should not suffer. It is therefore desirable that these young men should be released. If they function wrongly again then action will have to be taken. In regard to the others, there should be no hurry in releasing them and the situation should be closely watched. A great deal is said about negotiations with the R S S leaders. So far as we are concerned there is not much room or anxiety for negotiations. It must be remembered that the R S S is an organisation which

24 On 3 February 1949 Nehru in Parliament while refuting Sarat Chandra Bose's charges made on 2 December 1948 stated (1) it was not true that the British officers who had refused to serve in India after August 1947 were employed in the India House London (2) purchases were made through the Director General of Stores who was an Indian (3) the Indian High Commission did help the Indian students in getting apprenticeships (4) the cypher assistant in the Indian Embassy, Paris was not a non Indian and (5) the Embassy in Paris had no control over the Indian delegation's work at the U N General Assembly

25 On 2 February 1949

has always said something and done something else. They have called themselves a social organisation and yet they have functioned actively and violently on the political plane. Therefore any assurances they may give have no particular value. It is only action that counts. For the present, therefore, it is best to watch events and developments and not in any way to encourage the R S S leaders to imagine that we are anxious for some kind of a settlement with them.

23 The economic situation continues to dominate the scene in India. The recent addition to dearness allowance which the Government have announced,²⁶ has undoubtedly affected adversely many provincial governments. We quite realise that. But we came to the decision after prolonged consideration and consultation. In the balance, I am convinced that that was the right decision and that will ease the situation as a whole. It is clear, however, that the existing disparities between the Central Government employees and their salaries, etc., and the employees of provincial governments and state governments are a cause of grave dissatisfaction. We shall gradually have to evolve some uniform treatment.

24 There have been some strikes recently which can hardly be called economic strikes. A definite attempt to sabotage is to be seen in these strikes. Then there is a threat of posts and telegraphs strike²⁷ and possibly a railway strike.²⁸ Government have done everything in their power having regard to their resources to ease the situation for their employees. They just cannot do anything more. If in spite of this there is any strike, then the only course open to Government is to meet it with all the strength it has.

26 On 20 January 1949 the Government announced an increase of Rs. 10 per month as dearness allowance for those Central Government employees whose basic pay was less than Rs. 250 per month.

27 The All India Council of Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union decided to go on strike from 9 March 1949 demanding higher wages and permanent status for temporary staff.

28 A call was given on 20 January 1949 for a strike from 9 March 1949.

3 February 1949

25 We must distinguish between the two labour approaches. One approach deals with the real difficulties and disabilities of labour and employees; the other tries to gain political advantage and sometimes even threatens complete disruption and chaos. The former approach has to be met sympathetically; the latter must be opposed. We must try to gain the goodwill of as large a section of the community as possible. We must at the same time oppose those whose aim seems to be to break up everything and create chaotic conditions.

26 This argument applies to the use of repressive measures also. These measures unfortunately become inevitable sometimes and we have to use them. But always we must remember that repression has never crushed an idea or solved a problem. It is a temporary expedient for special occasions. There is a tendency sometimes to get used to the repressive apparatus and try to meet every problem by its means. That is a dangerous trend and we must always pull ourselves up. As I have pointed out to you, we have gained abroad a rather bad reputation because of the repressive legislation that has been passed in various provinces. I would beg of you to keep this matter in mind not only for the sake of our reputation but also from the point of view of solving the problems. In particular, the curtailment of the powers of the judiciary in regard to such matters is a most dangerous expedient as then the one great check on abuse is removed.

27 Perhaps the most important problem for us from the economic point of view is the food problem. I fear we have no record of success in regard to this and we have to face grave difficulties. We must tackle this afresh, not in a departmental way but as emergencies are tackled. It is essentially a problem which requires

- (1) An authority which can deal rapidly both in regard to policy and implementation

- (ii) Complete cooperation between the provincial governments and the Central Government
- (iii) Constant watching of results by statistical and other methods
- (iv) The cooperation of the public that is to say continuous approach to the public to inform them of how they can cooperate and measures taken to facilitate this

28 We are thinking about putting up some kind of authority mentioned in No (1) above. You will remember that in the course of the War the then Government formed some kind of a War Emergency Committee or War Resources Committee. We must look upon this food problem as a war problem or rather as a war against scarcity of food and deal with it as such.

29 It is clear that on account of a number of causes—the last World War, partition, etc.—the situation we have to meet is not a temporary upset but something much more radical. It is clear also that while we must and will import foodstuffs from outside to fill the gap in India, we cannot rely indefinitely on outside sources. This import of large quantities of food from outside is having a disastrous effect on our economy. It is not absolutely necessary for a country to be self-sufficient in food. But any large gap is a dangerous thing. Gandhiji constantly laid stress on our not relying on outside sources for food and to adjust our own supply and modes of living to the circumstances. I do not think a sufficient effort has been made to this end. There has been a good deal of talk about 'Grow More Food' but it is not at all clear what the results of this campaign have been. We have come to rely more and more on food from outside which means dollars. That is a very unhealthy situation. We may carry on for a year or two in this way but something has to be done to put an end to it within a reasonable period.

30 This does not mean, as has been suggested, that we must stop industrial growth or reduce it to a minimum and

3 February 1949

concentrate all our energies on food production That will produce an unbalanced economy and the progress of India would be retarded We must therefore aim at a balance between agriculture and industry

31 We have a number of big schemes in progress or in preparation which will lead to more food production At the same time we have to remember that the population is growing and this will consume all the additional food without bridging the gap The population problem is another important problem I need not go into it here We have of course to proceed with our big schemes and at the same time to consider smaller schemes which might bring quicker results The Grow More Food Campaign was really aimed at these smaller schemes But it is impossible to find with our present data how far it has succeeded There has been an impression that results had not been adequate and much of the money supplied has been wasted or not usefully employed All these matters have to be gone into

32 One aspect of the question to which Gandhiji always referred was an attempt to change our food habits so as to bring them more in accord with existing facts If there is not enough rice more wheat should be consumed If both wheat and rice are lacking then we must take to something else to some extent It must be remembered that other countries have suffered greatly owing to food scarcity during the last War They faced the situation not only by rationing but by inducing the public to take to other kinds of food which were available Indeed there was no choice about it We are so accustomed to our age long habits that we do not easily adapt ourselves to a change but circumstances compel us to do so today Indeed it is well known that purely from the health point of view some of our food habits require a change

33 I should like to suggest some practical steps which can be easily given effect to

- (i) The use of highly polished rice must be forbidden. This has been repeatedly recommended but little has been done though I believe some provinces have taken steps to this end. Polished rice is bad from the health and nutrition point of view. It involves wastage too. If semi-polished rice was used or unpolished rice the community would benefit in many ways.
- (ii) It is quite easy and desirable to mix powdered sweet potato with wheat. Speaking from experience I can say that the mixture (25 per cent sweet potato and 75 per cent wheat) is excellent. From the point of view of nutrition it is a good mixture and it tastes good. If we could use sweet potatoes in this way to any large extent we would be well on our way to fill the wheat scarcity in the country. Sweet potatoes can be easily grown and the quantity produced in a patch of land is very great, much greater than that of wheat. In some countries, notably in some States of America, sweet potatoes are in great use. Apart from inducing the public to use this mixture, all governmental agencies, rationing authorities, etc., can certainly start by doing this. Perhaps this may not be possible immediately because of a lack of a sufficient quantity of sweet potatoes, but certainly if we take steps from now we ought to be able to get sweet potatoes in adequate quantity fairly soon.
- (iii) Gram can, of course, be mixed with wheat producing a highly beneficial and tasteful mixture for bread.
- (iv) Bananas or plantains, as they are sometimes called in India, are very good food and easily grown in abundance. Their cultivation should be encouraged.
- (v) There is at present a glut of sugar and large stocks. Probably after the next season the position may grow worse. We must provide for this immediately by reducing sugar cane cultivation and turning the land to wheat, sweet potatoes, etc.

34 These are just some odd suggestions that struck me. But even these simple methods, if actively followed, would go a long way to solve our food problem. I commend them to your attention and trust that you will take steps in accordance with them. At the same time, an active and persistent campaign should be carried on to prevent waste which still continues. Some provinces have rules about the number of courses and number of people to be invited; others have no such restrictions. Situated as we are today, there must be these restrictions and lavish meals and banqueting must be frowned upon as bad form and anti social.

35 I have written to you a long letter for which I apologise. I would again draw your particular attention to what I have said above regarding the food position and to the urgent necessity of adequate machinery being devised at the Centre and in the provinces for quick action and full cooperation.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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15 February, 1949

possible that they might prefer the way of conquest to the way of compromise

2 Generalissimo Stalin's offer made through a press correspondent for further negotiations, etc., has met with a rebuff in the U S A³ While it is difficult to appreciate any rejection of a possible avenue towards settlement, it is equally difficult to deal with foreign affairs through press interviews. This new technique through the press almost indicates that what is desired is publicity and not so much a settlement. Each party seems to be bent on manoeuvring itself into a favourable position. The U S A are anxious to finalise the Atlantic Pact⁴ and to strengthen the Western Union before they enter into any further negotiations.

3 The Netherlands Government has not yet given any indication about its attitude towards the Security Council resolution on Indonesia⁵. There has been a crisis in the Dutch Government⁶. On the whole, however, it seems exceedingly unlikely that the Dutch Government will agree to that

³ Stalin in an interview to the International News Agency on 30 January 1949 said that the U S S R was prepared to sign a no war joint declaration with the United States, had no objection to meeting Truman to sign a peace pact and was ready for gradual disarmament. He added that the Berlin blockade could be lifted if only the Foreign Ministers Council discussed the future of Germany as a whole and the United States, Britain and France postponed the creation of a separate West German State.

⁴ At the initiative of the United States a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was set up on 4 April 1949. Its members were the United States, Great Britain, France, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Portugal. It aimed at ensuring the stability, well being and collective defence of the North Atlantic areas and consequent strengthening of the Western Union.

⁵ See ante p. 273.

⁶ The Dutch cabinet was divided on the question of acceptance of the Security Council's resolution of 28 January and on the question of release of all Republican leaders. Dr. Sassen, the Minister for Overseas Territory, resigned on 12 February in protest against the Security Council's resolution.

New Delhi
15 February, 1949

My dear Premier

There has been no outstanding event in foreign affairs during the last fortnight though many important happenings have taken place. In China the situation continues to be confused. The Communist forces are in a dominating position and there appears to be nobody strong enough to check them. Frantic attempts have been made to come to some kind of an agreement with them¹ But they have not succeeded. Part of the old Nationalist Government has gone to Canton and part remains at Nanking² Between these two sections there is a certain tug of war and a pulling in different directions. Meanwhile the Communist forces are calmly consolidating their position. Probably a compromise with the old regime would give them certain advantages as they would then be the successor authority in law. On the other hand this would also mean their succeeding not only to the status of the old Government of China but also to its liabilities. Hence it is

1 Chiang Kai-shek in his new year message suggested a plan for a negotiated peace with the Communists and on 8 January asked U.S.A., France, Britain and U.S.S.R. to mediate. The plan was rejected by the Communists but the plan for ceasefire announced on 14 January by the Communists was accepted by the Nationalists on 19 January. The peace talks started only in April 1949.

2 On 25 January Sun Fo, Premier of the Nationalist Government shifted his headquarters from Nanjing to Guangzhou (Canton). A group led by President Li Zongren which favoured a compromise with the Communists decided to continue functioning from Nanjing. Sun Fo, however, returned to Nanjing on 28 February 1949.

resolution. The consequence should be some stronger action by the Security Council. What exactly the Security Council will do then cannot be prophesied. It is clear however that nothing short of an implementation of that resolution will bring peace to Indonesia. Even that resolution is not considered enough by the Indonesian Republic.⁷ The next fortnight should see some clear development of the situation⁸ and it may then be necessary for the countries represented in the recent conference on Indonesia in New Delhi to take stock of the situation and decide on their course of action.

4 The situation in Burma continues to be difficult. There has been intense fighting in the Insein area between the Burmese forces and the Karens. Over four thousand Indians have been evacuated from Insein to Rangoon and the problem of giving relief to them has to be faced by us. The Burma Government is organising relief. But this is not likely to be sufficient. We have therefore asked our Ambassador to give relief where needed and have supplied him with some funds for this purpose. A number of Indians will probably want to return to India. We are making arrangements to this end.

5 Except for the loss of a good deal of property in Insein where a number of buildings were burnt during the fighting, Indians have not suffered any casualties. Fortunately, neither party in the civil war has attacked them in any way. They were given full facilities by both parties to withdraw from Insein.

7 On 12 February 1948 the Indonesian Republican Emergency Government demanded recognition and immediate restoration of the Republican territory as a precondition to any settlement.

8 On 26 February the Netherlands Government announced a round table conference at The Hague to facilitate transfer of power to the Indonesians by 1 July 1949 but maintained that the Dutch forces would be retained in Indonesia to help the new government. The plan was rejected by both the United Nations and the Republicans.

criticisms were justified. We must always be ready to correct our errors. In any event we cannot treat this food situation lightly. I wrote to you at some length about it in my last letter. I would point out to you that basically the situation is not a dangerous one or one which we cannot tackle effectively.

12 Briefly put it may be said that before the war there was a three per cent deficit in our food requirements. This three per cent deficit was supplied through normal channels from abroad chiefly from Burma. The war and the partition resulted in increasing our basic deficit to about 6 to 7 per cent. This has been partly caused by the wheat growing areas of the Punjab and Sind being cut off from us. This present year the deficit is larger and is between 9 to 10 per cent because of bad harvest and other calamities.

13 The basic problem therefore is to cover the 6 to 7 per cent deficit having due regard to a growing population. This should not be difficult even in existing circumstances and without any large food growing schemes coming into operation. When our major river valley schemes are functioning we shall bring considerable areas under cultivation. But even before that happens I think it should not be difficult to meet the present deficit. We must therefore definitely aim at meeting this deficit within two years or so and putting an end to the import of large quantities of food from outside.

14 This necessitates our undertaking relatively small schemes which can bring rapid results. I was pleased to find that three new schemes are being investigated in the Narbada and Tapi valleys. These are not expensive as such schemes go and are likely to yield substantial results within two or three years. I imagine that other provinces could also have similar schemes. I should like to draw your special attention to this matter. If you have any ideas on this subject please communicate with us and we shall immediately explore them further. Meanwhile we must go ahead with procurement and the other steps that I

therefore, be expected that a partial strike on the railways will take place. It is clear that this strike is a purely political strike meant as a challenge to government as such and has little to do with economic grievances. Government, as you know, have gone all out to meet the demands made upon it, even at the cost of the rest of the community. This has been appreciated by a large section of the railwaymen. But one section is bent on a strike whatever government may or may not do. This strike, therefore, is in the nature of a revolt and indeed the circulars issued by this section speak approvingly of sabotage and widespread damage to railway properties. No government can watch this kind of thing supinely. Therefore we have to face this challenge and we have to prepare fully for it. This preparation means protection from possible sabotage and in this the cooperation of your government is particularly needed. You will receive advice and suggestion on this matter from our Home Ministry.

10 The question of the right to strike by government servants in essential services is receiving attention.¹¹ Government have no desire to come in the way of trade unionism or to forbid strikes for economic reasons. But there are certain essential services in which any breakdown would injure the larger community greatly and some protection is necessary. At the present moment any stoppage of transport would seriously affect the feeding of famine ridden populations, apart from dislocating the distribution of food all over India.

11 The food situation was discussed in Parliament some days ago and very strong criticisms were made.¹² Perhaps some of the

11 The Bill introduced in Parliament on 25 February to prevent strikes in essential services was withdrawn on 5 March following an assurance from the Railwaymen's Federation and the All India Telegraph and Telephone Engineering Union that they would not participate in the proposed strike.

12 On 3 February there was a debate on the non official resolution in the Constituent Assembly demanding investigation into the reasons for the failure of the Grow More Food Campaign. Members also suggested suitable legislation for the purpose.

threats or violence I would suggest to you to be prepared for any contingency that might arise.¹⁴

19 There is another and relatively small matter, to which I should like to refer. This relates to official dress. People have often suggested that there should be a national uniform dress in India. It is difficult to have a uniform dress in a big country with varying climates and old established customs. Nor do I see any necessity for an absolute uniformity. But a certain uniformity for official occasions appears desirable. We should proceed rather carefully in this matter and without any compulsion. For our Ambassadors abroad, we have laid down that a black *sherwani* and *churidar* pyjamas should be used on official occasions. This has been fairly successful. Where possible, this dress might be used for official occasions and an alternative is a black buttoned up short coat with white trousers. This latter dress is simple and convenient. There should be no ties or collars. Modern life demands something which does not get entangled in machinery, trams and buses and railway trains. We have, therefore, suggested to our officials in New Delhi to adopt this dress for official occasions. But we have made it clear that this is not to be considered compulsory. We hope that the habit will grow gradually.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

14 Master Tara Singh was detained on 19 February while he was en route to Delhi to preside over the meeting prohibited by the Government of the General Council of the Akali Dal.

mentioned in my last letter about changing our food habits. You have already been addressed about reducing sugar cane cultivation which means reducing the price of sugar. I understand that this matter is being considered at a conference in New Delhi soon.

15 If we could even stop the wastage of food, that itself would go some way to meet our deficit. I would suggest to you again that there should be a strict limitation to the number of people at banquets and the like and to the number of courses served.

16 I would welcome any suggestions from you on this question of increasing our food supplies.

17 The situation in regard to the Akalis in East Punjab and Delhi has deteriorated. The most irresponsible and incendiary speeches have been delivered by some Akali leaders and extraordinary demands have been put forward which are completely at variance with our policy in regard to communalism. Indeed it has been stated in public by some Akali leaders that they will pursue the policy which Mr Jinnah adopted in the pre partition days. It is most unfortunate that there should be any persons in India who can think or talk in this irresponsible manner.

18 It is clear that we cannot tolerate communalism or accept any demand which is so totally opposed to our general policy. It is proposed to hold an Akali Conference in Delhi on the 19th and 20th February. A public meeting has been forbidden. But there may be a gathering in a local *gurdwara*. We have no desire to prevent any gatherings in *gurdwaras*, provided they are for a religious object and do not get converted into a political meeting. There is a possibility of the situation becoming a serious one as we do not propose to surrender to

15 February, 1949

without those large schemes we must try to balance our diet and balance our consumption with our production. We must always remember that the population is growing and unless we proceed at a faster rate in food production than the growth of population, we shall always be in difficulties. Therefore an approach from all directions and an immediate approach is necessary.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
15 February, 1949

My dear Premier *

Shri Shri Ram¹ has sent me a note on the food problem. He has distributed this rather widely and perhaps you may have seen it already. Nevertheless I am sending you a copy as it is an interesting and instructive note. I do not recommend everything that he has said in this note, that is for you to consider. But I think the main argument is sound and we should proceed along the lines indicated.

He suggests that the District Magistrate should be given a deputy for his normal work while the District Magistrate himself concentrates on various aspects of food production etc. I rather doubt if the District Magistrate can do this because of his other very important responsibilities. But it is worthwhile considering whether he should be given a deputy who will concentrate under his direction on the food problem and production of foodstuffs.

I am sending this note to you because I welcome all suggestions. We must get out of the rut of thinking on old lines and explore every avenue. We must think in terms of making India self sufficient in food as soon as possible. There is no alternative and it is a fatal business to go on imagining that we should import large quantities of food from outside. It is also not healthy to wait till some large schemes materialise. Even

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 Sir Shri Ram (1884-1963) A leading industrialist of Delhi

without those large schemes we must try to balance our diet and balance our consumption with our production. We must always remember that the population is growing and unless we proceed at a faster rate in food production than the growth of population, we shall always be in difficulties. Therefore an approach from all directions, and an immediate approach, is necessary.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
9 March, 1949

My dear Premier

I am exceedingly sorry for the delay in sending you my fortnightly letter. Much has happened in the past fortnight or three weeks on which I would have liked to write to you. But the very fact of these events taking place one after the other has come in the way of my writing.

2 An event which came all too suddenly and rather overwhelmed us was the death of Smt. Sarojini Naidu.¹ Her passing away has been a blow to us personally and to our cause. It is proposed to issue an appeal soon for a memorial for her in the shape of a children's hospital in Allahabad. I hope that this will meet with adequate response.

3 Today has been the day fixed by some misguided persons for some kind of a general strike on the railways and some other concerns. We are not frightened of strikes, but this is a distressing symptom in India. I do not mean the strike so much, but the whole background of violence and sabotage. A horrible example of this took place in Calcutta, when the Dum Dum airfield and many other places were suddenly attacked and people killed.² Four persons or more, including Englishmen,

1 (1879-1949). Poet and politician. President of the Congress 1925. Governor of U.P. 1947-49. She died on 2 March 1949.

2 On 26 February at Dum Dum airport in Calcutta, an ammunition factory, a British-owned engineering firm, two police stations and a sub-treasury were raided simultaneously by armed gangs. According to the West Bengal Government, the raids were organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party of India.

were hurled into a blazing furnace. Anything more horrible it is difficult to imagine. It is obvious that this kind of thing does grave injury to the cause of labour. A particularly distressing feature was the racial element in it. Fortunately this is not in evidence in India as a whole.

4 This incident has made us more wary even than we were before. It is quite clear that we cannot take any risks and cannot allow a few malevolent individuals to hold up the community.

5 About two weeks ago another sad death occurred — that of Dr Syed Hussain, our Ambassador in Egypt.³ He died suddenly. He had done very good work in Egypt and the Middle East generally and established a position for himself and for India during the brief period of his stay in Cairo. We knew his old record as a patriot and as a man of ability. He fully justified this record and there was sorrow at his death not only in India but in Egypt also and the Government of Egypt gave him a State military funeral.

6 You know how Government have dealt with the Akali situation. For months and months both the Central Government and the East Punjab Government allowed matters to drift because we were averse to taking any steps against the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh⁴ and some of his colleagues went on with speeches and declarations which were violent and which invited trouble. Ultimately Government took action and prevented the Akali Conference in Delhi. Later Master Tara Singh was arrested.⁵ Fortunately the situation was fully under control and the action taken by Government has had a satisfactory result.

3 On 25 February 1949

4 (1885-1967) Prominent Sikh leader who led an agitation for the division of East Punjab to form a Sikh majority state

5 See *ante* p. 295

7 I should like to draw again your very special attention to the food problem. I have written to you about this repeatedly. I want to emphasize that it is our firm policy now to cover the deficit in foodstuffs within two years at the latest. On no account can we permit this business of importing food from outside to continue beyond two years from now. That means a definite plan at the Centre and in the provinces. That means that the plan should show results every six months or so so that there is a progressive lessening of the deficit. That means the fullest cooperation between the provinces and the Centre. Our Food and Agriculture Ministries are addressing you separately on this issue and are also calling some conferences of Secretaries. We propose to take some other steps also of which information will be sent to you⁶.

8 We have to concentrate

- (i) on speedy and effective procurement
- (ii) on additional production of foodgrains
- (iii) on production of other articles of foodstuffs such as sweet potato, bananas, tapioca, etc.
- (iv) on a certain change in our food habits so that less of wheat and rice may be consumed and might give place to other kinds of food.

9 The cooperation of the provinces with the Centre is absolutely essential. There is ground for thinking that there has not been that full cooperation whether in the matter of procurement or other matters. Indeed there is a tendency for some provinces to go their own way, no doubt for adequate reasons which they can advance. But in the present crisis no reason can be adequate for a province to go its own way and against the general food policy of the Centre.

6 The Government of India directed the provincial governments to consider tightening measures for the stricter enforcement of orders relating to food control and rationing. It also called upon the provincial governments to take steps for local procurement of foodgrains and not to rely on imports.

10 I might inform you that the expert delegation from the International Bank⁷ which has been touring the country came and reported to us privately⁸ During their first visit to Delhi, they were agreeably impressed with what was being done at the Centre in regard to our various schemes and plans When they visited the provinces, they were pleased with many things that they saw there and not so pleased with some other things that they saw Above all they informed us that there was this dangerous tendency for provinces not to cooperate with the Centre in vital matters If this continued then all schemes will be rather ineffective They laid the greatest stress on this and I pass on their views to you These views are objective views of disinterested parties and should have weight with you

11 It is my firm conviction that we are on the upgrade now and the next few months and years will show a definite advance on the economic plane But that conviction is based on a major premise, namely the fullest cooperation with the provinces For that we have to rely upon you The food policy must necessarily be uniform all over India Otherwise it will fail or will only succeed partially

12 This applies not only to food policy but to other things also The tendency for different parts of the country to pull in different directions will surely come in the way of any effective and successful working of our plans If we could but concentrate on a few important matters during the next two years, I have no doubt that we would have laid the foundations

7 The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (I B R D) was founded in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference to provide long term funds for investment in productive ventures

8 During its tour of six weeks in February March 1949 the Banks delegation examined the technical and financial soundness of development projects in the country and assessed the general economic conditions in order to formulate possible lines of the Banks assistance to the Indian development programme

of great progress all over India I would beg of you therefore to impress upon your government the absolute necessity of cooperation with the Centre

13 A number of provinces have introduced a sales tax It is rather doubtful how far these bills were strictly *intra vires* of the provincial legislatures Apart from this question difficulties arise because of the variety of this legislation and because of its overlapping character⁹ It has become necessary that there should be uniformity in this and our Home Ministry will take some steps to this end and consult you about it¹⁰

14 The U N Commission on Kashmir is continuing its activities and is having conferences with our officers I shall not write much about this now But I would like to draw your attention to a new development in Pakistan in regard to Kashmir In the press and statements it is made out that a plebiscite is not necessary This indicates that Pakistan has cold feet about a plebiscite I do not myself know if ultimately there will be a plebiscite because there are many difficulties in the way But it is interesting to note the growing fear of the plebiscite on the Pakistan side We have in any event to prepare for it

15 You may have read in the papers about a so called conference on Burma in New Delhi¹¹ This was rather an

9 On 2 March 1949 the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce urged the Central Government to rationalize the sales tax as various anomalies were to be found in the levying of the tax in different provinces For instance the tax rate was not uniform in the provinces and sometimes the tax had to be paid each time the commodities crossed provincial boundaries

10 Later the Constitution empowered the States to impose sales tax subject to certain restrictions but in 1956 their right to impose this tax on goods in transit from one State to another was transferred to the Central Government

11 There was an informal meeting of four Commonwealth countries Britain Australia Sri Lanka and India--on 28 February

exaggerated way of putting it and our press played it up unnecessarily. It is a fact that we are tremendously interested in Burma. Anything that may happen in Burma will be of the deepest concern to India, apart from its effects on a vast Indian population in Burma. We took advantage of the presence here of the U K Trade Minister¹² and the Australian Foreign Minister¹³ to have some informal talks on Burma. As a result of these talks we suggested some kind of mediation to the Burmese Government. We felt that the only effective way of dealing with the situation was to put an end to the civil strife that was going on. We had no desire to interfere and in fact we think that Thakin Nu's Government has offered very fair proposals to the Karens¹⁴. We would have supported the Government proposals. Thakin Nu, however, has felt that perhaps this is not the best time to offer mediation. We are therefore not taking any step for the present and we shall await any further approach from the Burmese Government. We do not intend to and indeed we cannot, take any step there without the fullest concurrence of the Burmese Government. Meanwhile the situation is not at all satisfactory and in some ways has deteriorated. The Communists, whose revolt had been crushed, are now gradually creeping back as some kind of allies of the Karens although the Karens have really nothing to do with the Communists. But civil strife brings strange bed fellows together.

12 Arthur George Bottomley (b 1907) British politician of the Labour Party. Under Secretary for Dominions 1946-47. Secretary for Overseas Trade 1947-51. Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs 1964-66.

13 H V Evatt (1894-1965) Leader of the Labour Party in Australia. Minister for External Affairs 1941-49. President of U N General Assembly 1948-49.

14 On 1 February Thakin Nu said that his Government was prepared to concede to the Karens a separate state within the Union of Burma. On 27 February he appealed for cessation of hostilities and restoration of law and order so that general elections could be held. But the talks between the Karens and the government broke down on 9 April 1949 as the Karens demanded restoration of areas under their control during the truce period.

16 We talk of the Communists in India and in Burma, but it must be remembered that we are hardly dealing with the economic doctrine of communism. We are dealing with active revolts and what is more, rather brutal and bloody revolts, where individual killing is indulged in. In Burma the economic situation is very bad and the rice exports will probably be affected.

17 The Indonesian question still is in the melting pot. The Dutch Government have made certain proposals which *prima facie* have an appearance of fairness¹⁵. But on closer examination they reveal themselves as clever manoeuvring, not only to put aside completely the Delhi Conference but also to bypass the Security Council. That would be dangerous from the Indonesian point of view and therefore this Dutch manoeuvre has to be resisted. Some of the great powers are far too anxious to find some method of helping the Dutch to save their face as well as their position. Still I hope that the Security Council will take up a strong attitude and insist on its direction being carried out.

18 In China there is nothing to be said except that the Nationalist Government progressively deteriorates, and it is only a question of time when a Communist government will be effectively controlling the government of at least half of China. There will be very little to stop them from the rest of China. What the nature of this Communist or Communist controlled government will be remains to be seen.

19 Meanwhile India with all her problems and difficulties, is the only State in all these vast regions of Eastern, South Eastern, and Western Asia which can be looked upon not only as a firmly established State but also one that is advancing towards greater strength both political and economic. Our budget has

¹⁵ See *ante* p. 290

been criticised ¹⁶ But leaving out the minor criticisms, it is a budget showing strength. It is a cautious budget. We have taken the risk of perhaps displeasing some people in order that we might not take any greater risks now and go ahead more rapidly in the future. After all that has happened during the past year, the budget may well be said to show a fundamental soundness and stability in India. I have little doubt that the next year will see progress in many sectors of our national life and economy. There is a vitality in India which must have its way. Foreigners who have come here either for the first time or after a year or so, are astonished at the change for the better that they see here. Even the hard-headed businessmen of the International Bank told me of their surprise at the enthusiasm and high class ability that they came across. All these foreigners go back with the conviction that India is a great State, rapidly marching forward, both politically and economically. In the world India's new position is well recognised.

20 As you know, we have become deficit in cotton as a result of partition. ¹⁷ This shortage has been accentuated by the recent damage to the crops by drought and floods in various areas. The mills are already finding it difficult to procure cotton within the ceiling price fixed. I understand that at the conference which the Minister for Industry and Supply had with the provincial representatives in December, it was agreed that provincial governments should requisition cotton for the mills in their areas whenever necessary. The mills, however, still complain that they have not received substantial assistance in this matter. I understand that while some provinces and states

¹⁶ The Union budget presented to Parliament on 28 February 1949 was criticised for abolition of the capital gains tax for industry, income tax concessions, enhanced rate of duties on commodities like sugar and petrol and low priority to the agricultural sector.

¹⁷ As against the requirement by the textile mills of 4 million bales of cotton, India after partition was producing only 3 million bales. Before the Second World War, undivided India was producing 5 to 6 million bales of cotton, though the production had come down to 42 lakhs during war time.

have promulgated a licensing order meant to prevent cotton from getting into the hands of speculators and hoarders others have not done so I shall be glad if the provincial governments would give careful consideration to the question of maintaining cotton supplies to mills in order to relieve our shortage of cloth

21 I go back to what I said at the beginning of this letter that is about the impression of the International Bank Mission after their tour of India The leader of that Mission expressed their great appreciation of the way some provincial governments had prepared themselves for their talks with them They were impressed with our engineers and with the general enthusiasm they saw But they expressed their distress at the way some provincial governments were trying to function entirely independently of the Centre in regard to development projects Some of them seem to be unaware of the dollar problem and some tried to approach the International Bank independently It was pointed out to us that this kind of separate approaches and separate working out of schemes without reference to the Centre would lead to great difficulties and would have an inevitable reaction on provincial financial resources and the availability of the necessary raw materials as well as of technical personnel The leader of the Mission told us that the Centre must exercise more vigorously control over the overall development of the country Another point that was mentioned to us was the preference shown for American capital equipment even though this was available from the United Kingdom In the latter case of course dollars would not be needed It was thought that because of earlier delivery the U S should be preferred But when the equipment actually arrived work on site was not ready to receive it This showed a lack of coordination and a lack of planning

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 April, 1949

My dear Premier,

My last letter to you was sent on the 9th March, later than usual. I have skipped a fortnight and have now come back to the beginning of the month.

2 While we are naturally concerned with our domestic problems, developments in the international field are becoming more and more important for us. The whole situation in Eastern and South Eastern Asia is in a state of flux.

3 The issue of India and the Commonwealth has also to be faced squarely in the near future and, as you must know, I am going to London to attend the Dominion Prime Ministers' Conference which begins on the 21st April.¹ The position in Burma has deteriorated and there appears to be no clear way of dealing with it or of our giving any help to ensure stability. The Indonesian question drags on its weary course in the Security Council and elsewhere.² So does the Kashmir issue before the United Nations Commission.³

1 From 21 to 28 April 1949

2 On 23 March the Security Council called upon the Dutch to implement the Council's resolution of 28 January. It also directed the U.N. Commission to persuade the Republican leaders to attend the round table conference at The Hague. The Dutch offer to hold talks was accepted by the Republicans on 2 April.

3 The U.N. Commission was negotiating a truce proposal with India and Pakistan.

continue somewhat and affect the situation in Tibet⁵ Indo China and Siam To some extent these neighbouring countries are bound to be affected Tibet is a difficult country for any outside force to enter But the internal economy of Tibet is very primitive On the one hand there are religious heads the Lamas who are also the feudal chiefs on the other hand there are the people who are more or less serfs Such a situation always has a certain explosive character unless economic changes take place The success of communism in China may apply as a spark to this explosive situation in Tibet This may not take place suddenly or quickly but the general tendency would be there

8 In Sinkiang province of China Soviet influence is already considerable and the Soviets have obtained a privileged position by treaty with the Nationalist China⁶ Sinkiang touches upon the Kashmir frontier and Afghanistan

9 In Indo China the French Government have totally failed to defeat the Vietnam forces The Viet Minh represents a nationalist movement with fairly strong communist leanings The Chinese Communists will no doubt fully sympathise with it The French having failed during the past two or three years are certainly not likely to make good now⁷ and the victory of Chinese communism will make their position much worse

5 In June 1912 the Dalai Lama the religious and political head of Tibet had declared Tibet independent and assumed full sovereign rights

6 The Sino Soviet treaty for economic collaboration in Sinkiang signed in 1939 for ten years gave the Soviets exclusive rights to operate a Sino-Soviet airline set up and manage an aeronautical factory exploit and explore the oil fields and mine uranium and other minerals The treaty was not renewed in 1949

7 In July 1948 the French derecognised the Viet Minh Government headed by Ho Chu Minh and on 8 March 1949 signed an agreement with Bao Dai ex emperor of Annam—a state in Vietnam and spoke of the unity and independence of Vietnam within the framework of the French Union

4 From a world point of view probably the most important event is the success of the Communist armies in China. Undoubtedly this is affecting and will affect more and more in the future not only the entire position in Asia but in the world. For us in India it is of the utmost importance.

5 It is clear that there is no force left in China which can effectively check the advance of the Communist armies. These armies are sitting now on the banks of the Yangtse and can advance just when they like. The Nationalist Government has been in a process of disintegration and are really in no position to insist on anything. Terms of peace therefore are practically terms of surrender.⁴ At the most some minor point here and there might be safeguarded. It is to the advantage of the Communists in China to get some legal settlement through a peace treaty. But whether this advantage is outweighed in their eyes by other factors or not is not clear.

6 In any event what is likely to happen is a consolidation of the Communist regime in about two thirds of China and the advance of the Communist forces towards the south. Within a few months they should occupy the whole of China. It is possible that a splinter government might be formed in Canton to oppose the Communists. But this is hardly likely to achieve anything. We may take it therefore that the whole of China will be under the control of the Chinese Communists within a few months.

7 The question then arises as to whether the revolutionary urge to advance will be satisfied and whether the new Communist dominated government will be chiefly occupied in dealing with internal problems or whether that urge will

⁴ After the talks from 1 April between the Nationalists and the Communists at Beijing broke down Mao Zedong on 21 April ordered the Communist armies to make the final attack throughout the country.

continue somewhat and affect the situation in Tibet,⁵ Indo China and Siam. To some extent these neighbouring countries are bound to be affected. Tibet is a difficult country for any outside force to enter. But the internal economy of Tibet is very primitive. On the one hand there are religious heads, the Lamas, who are also the feudal chiefs; on the other hand there are the people who are more or less serfs. Such a situation always has a certain explosive character unless economic changes take place. The success of communism in China may apply as a spark to this explosive situation in Tibet. This may not take place suddenly or quickly but the general tendency would be there.

8 In Sinkiang province of China Soviet influence is already considerable and the Soviets have obtained a privileged position by treaty with the Nationalist China.⁶ Sinkiang touches upon the Kashmir frontier and Afghanistan.

9 In Indo China, the French Government have totally failed to defeat the Vietnam forces. The Viet Minh represents a nationalist movement with fairly strong communist leanings. The Chinese Communists will no doubt fully sympathise with it. The French, having failed during the past two or three years, are certainly not likely to make good now⁷ and the victory of Chinese communism will make their position much worse.

5 In June 1912 the Dalai Lama, the religious and political head of Tibet had declared Tibet independent and assumed full sovereign rights.

6 The Sino-Soviet treaty for economic collaboration in Sinkiang, signed in 1939 for ten years, gave the Soviets exclusive rights to operate a Sino-Soviet airline, set up and manage an aeronautical factory, exploit and explore the oil fields and mine uranium and other minerals. The treaty was not renewed in 1949.

7 In July 1948 the French derecognised the Viet Minh Government headed by Ho Chi Minh and on 8 March 1949 signed an agreement with Bao Dai, ex-emperor of Annam—a state in Vietnam, and spoke of the unity and independence of Vietnam within the framework of the French Union.

There can be little doubt that the French will have to withdraw from Indo China and some kind of a government will be established there which should be friendly to Communist China

10 In Siam, there has been continuous manoeuvring at the top and palace revolutions⁸ Behind this, however, there are deeper causes of unrest and the present government can hardly be called stable Events in China will no doubt encourage the anti government people in Siam, both nationalist and Communist and it is quite possible that the government may fall and give place to another which represents radical elements and Communists It must be remembered that in Siam, agrarian conditions are bad, and the government has largely represented big landlord elements It is easy therefore for a movement against them to be built up

11 In Burma, as I have said above, the situation is even worse than it was and there appears no hope of the return of security and stability There is no obvious possibility of another government which can control the situation effectively At the same time the present government is hardly in a position to do so Therefore conflict continues and economic conditions go from bad to worse Again in Burma as elsewhere, the victory of the Chinese Communists and their approach to the Burmese border will make a difference

12 The policy of some of the Western powers has been generally to support the more conservative governments in South East Asia This policy has failed In China, even big scale

⁸ In 1935 Marshal Luang Phibun Songgram became the regent of King Ananda Mahipol and supported the Japanese during the Second World War Following Ananda Mahipol's assassination in June 1946 Nai Pridi Phanomyong who was pro British and a nationalist became the new regent In November 1947 Marshal Phibun Songgram seized power in a military coup and formed a coalition government Pridi Phanomyong tried unsuccessfully to oust Songgram in October 1948 and March 1949

support by the U S A has not succeeded in making any difference. Indeed psychologically speaking it has been a definite disadvantage. People in China have felt that the Chinese Government was becoming a stooge of foreign powers and have turned away from it. It may be said that the victory of the Communists in China is due less to their inherent strength than to the disintegration of the Nationalist Government and its exceeding unpopularity with all classes of people. It could not learn the lesson in time and so it is passing into history.

13 To a much smaller extent that policy is failing in other parts of South East Asia. It is becoming impossible for conservative landlord and like elements to control the situation in any country even with foreign help. Foreign help discredits them even more in the eyes of their people.

14 The result of all this would appear to be that Communist dominated governments are likely to be formed over a great part of Central Eastern and South East Asia and that is a very large part of the earth's surface. It is again a problem how far these governments will be actuated by nationalist considerations. Will they function like Yugoslavia⁹ that is to say will their policy generally though Communist be governed by nationalist considerations also or will this policy be entirely subordinated to Soviet policy? In any event probably in foreign affairs they will support the Soviet policy. They may not go the whole hog in case of war.

15 All this poses numerous problems to us in India. Directly we are not likely to be affected by these changes and there is no great fear of large scale infiltration across our frontiers or like trouble. I feel that the apprehension about actual trouble on

9 In November 1945 the Communist Party of Yugoslavia which had been under Marshal Tito leading the partisan movement declared a Yugoslav People's Republic. But it soon clashed with the Soviet Government and asserted its national independence.

There can be little doubt that the French will have to withdraw from Indo China and some kind of a government will be established there which should be friendly to Communist China

10 In Siam, there has been continuous manoeuvring at the top and palace revolutions⁸ Behind this, however, there are deeper causes of unrest and the present government can hardly be called stable Events in China will no doubt encourage the anti government people in Siam, both nationalist and Communist and it is quite possible that the government may fall and give place to another which represents radical elements and Communists It must be remembered that in Siam, agrarian conditions are bad, and the government has largely represented big landlord elements It is easy therefore for a movement against them to be built up

11 In Burma, as I have said above, the situation is even worse than it was and there appears no hope of the return of security and stability There is no obvious possibility of another government which can control the situation effectively. At the same time the present government is hardly in a position to do so Therefore, conflict continues and economic conditions go from bad to worse Again in Burma as elsewhere, the victory of the Chinese Communists and their approach to the Burmese border will make a difference

12 The policy of some of the Western powers has been generally to support the more conservative governments in South East Asia This policy has failed In China even big scale

8 In 1935 Marshal Luang Phibun Songgram became the regent of King Ananda Mahipol and supported the Japanese during the Second World War Following Ananda Mahipol's assassination in June 1946 Nai Pridi Phanomyong who was pro British and a nationalist became the new regent In November 1947 Marshal Phibun Songgram seized power in a military coup and formed a coalition government Pridi Phanomyong tried unsuccessfully to oust Songgram in October 1948 and March 1949

17 The Western powers are gradually coming to realise that their policy in regard to Asian countries has not been a happy one. Their support of reactionary regimes has not helped those regimes to continue and has merely made those powers more unpopular in Asia. They are now thinking hard as to what they should do to change this policy. Probably it is too late for them to do anything very effective in this matter before the changes they fear come about.

18 In Indonesia the conflict of two policies is very evident. On the one hand the Western powers are anxious to win the goodwill of nationalism in Indonesia and that means the Indonesian Republic for the alternative means their losing such little influence as they possess in Asia. On the other hand their European commitments induce them to build up a West European front Atlantic Pact etc. which include the Netherlands Government. It includes in other words certain colonial powers like the Netherlands and France and it becomes the interest of the Western group to build up the strength of these colonial powers. To some extent this can be done by the exploitation of colonial territories by those colonial powers. Congo for instance is a preserve of Belgium and is a very rich preserve containing probably the largest deposits of uranium minerals which are so necessary for atomic energy. Thus from the point of view of consolidating their position in Western Europe some powers have to go slowly in regard to the Netherlands and do not wish to weaken the Netherlands. From the point of view of their position in Asia they wish to support the Indonesian Republic. There is this inherent conflict and hence their vacillating policy.

19 The fact is that in the larger world context it is far more important even from their point of view to support nationalist and progressive elements in Asia and more particularly not to encourage any colonial exploitation in Asia. This will count for far more in the end than in smaller gains in Western Europe.

our frontiers is exaggerated though of course we should be on our guard against it. The real difference will be two fold

- (i) continuous tension
- (ii) the raising of Communist morale in India

That morale is relatively low at the present moment. The Communists in India have even from the Communist point of view adopted a very wrong course. They have gone in for terrorist activities and sabotage and raised a volume of feeling against them in India. It is manifest that they cannot succeed by these methods in making much difference to the Indian scene though they can create trouble. They have isolated themselves. Even in the Communist Party in India there has been much grumbling at this terrorists policy and some prominent Communists are said to have left the Party or been purged.¹⁰ All this shows that the Communist leadership in India has overbalanced itself by its successive violence and wrong tactics and their morale at present is not high. Events in China and elsewhere however bolster up this morale to some extent and economic conditions help.

16 This leads us to a consideration of the general economic position in these countries of Asia. Undoubtedly the success of the Communists has been due to primitive types of agrarian economy and the only way to deal with such a situation is to make rapid changes in this agrarian economy. These changes can be either towards peasant proprietorship or to some socialised system in land. Which of these courses is more suitable would depend on each individual country. If there is no peasant proprietorship and the masses of agriculturists are in the nature of serfs then the change over to socialist economy might be more rapid.

10 For instance in December 1948 P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Party till February 1948, was suspended.

right policy and we should hold on to it. This policy was to retain our complete independence as a Republic in regard to internal and external affairs and at the same time to associate ourselves with the Commonwealth for purposes of consultation and cooperation. There is a desire on all sides for some way out to be found for this to take place. But certain difficulties have arisen. It may be that we shall get over them or the matter may be left undecided for some more time. There are undoubtedly considerable advantages for us to remain in the Commonwealth while maintaining our complete independence. But there are disadvantages for us to become tied up or committed to any policies which may come in our way in the future and which may be opposed to our general approach. We want to be friendly and cooperative with the nations of the West but not at the cost of hostility to others. We feel that such a position will enable us not only to serve our own interests but those of Asia and of world peace much more effectively. If India can help even to a small extent in averting a world war she will have done a great service to the world.

23 Generally speaking our relations with Pakistan are better. But incidents continue to happen which come in the way of real understanding. The East Bengal Government have started a vendetta against the Gandhi Ashram in Noakhali and arrested some of the workers left there by Gandhiji.¹² They have made wild charges against them which we cannot bring ourselves to believe. We cannot say much about Pakistani nationals but we have a right to speak up for Indian nationals who have been working there. We have asked for a full enquiry into the allegations made.

24 In the Frontier Province conditions appear to worsen. You may have seen the statement I made regarding the

¹² Between September 1948 and February 1949 two persons were arrested on charges of abduction and murder. On 4 March two more workers were arrested without any charge.

20 For India all these developments and possibilities pose new questions or old questions in a new garb. We cannot associate ourselves in any way with a policy in favour of colonial exploitation. This not only because it would be opposed to all that we have stood for but also because in the present context it would be a most unwise and harmful policy and is destined to fail. Hence our very special interest in Indonesia. Also we have to realise that economic reform is essential in order to meet the new situation. We in India or some of us are apt to think in rather static terms not realising that big changes are afoot and that we shall be affected by them. Most of our people are mostly concerned with the next elections which may take place about the end of 1950 or perhaps early in 1951.¹¹ No doubt these elections may well take place but much will happen before they take place. It is better for us to think of all this that is happening now and will happen in the course of the next year or two than to lose ourselves in thoughts of the election. Ultimately India's strength and stability will depend upon her economic position and to the extent that we improve the standard of the masses. That is the vital issue before us.

21 There is undoubtedly a great deal of activity going on all over India both in the Centre and in the provinces to develop our resources and innumerable schemes are in various stages of development. I have no doubt that our progress is going to be fairly rapid in the future. Nevertheless I have a feeling that there is a certain lack of coordination in these various efforts and what is necessary is more planning. I hope that in the months to come we shall give intensive thought to this business of planning.

22 The question of India's place in the Commonwealth which is coming up for discussion soon in London must be viewed in this larger context of Asian and world developments. I think that the policy we adopted six months or more ago was a

11 The first general elections took place in March 1952.

1 April, 1949

26 We have summoned some of our Ambassadors abroad to confer with us Sardar Panikkar,¹⁷ our Ambassador in Nanking, is here Our High Commissioner in London¹⁸ has also just arrived and our Ambassador in Moscow Vijayalakshmi Pandit,¹⁹ is due here soon From here she will go to her new post in Washington Shri Dhirajlal Desai²⁰ our Minister at Berne in Switzerland, has also paid a visit to us to discuss various matters There has been a great deal of speculation about these visits as well as about other matters There is really nothing to speculate about and it is not India's way to carry on secret diplomacy We cannot shout out everything from the house tops but no essential step is taken or can be taken behind the backs of the people It is of great help to confer with our Ambassadors to understand a vast changing situation A nation's foreign policy is based on certain principles and objectives, but is at the same time very largely influenced by day to day happenings Otherwise it becomes purely academic and unreal

27 You will have noticed that our Industry and Supply Ministry has introduced legislation for the central control of certain industries²¹ We feel that this is necessary from the point of view of planning and coordination and the proper use of our

17 K.M. Panikkar (1895-1963) Served in princely states before independence Ambassador to China 1948-52 Egypt 1952-53 and France 1956-1959 member States Reorganisation Commission 1954-56 Author of several historical works

18 V. K. Krishna Menon (1896-1974) Secretary of the India League in London 1929-47 Indian High Commissioner London 1947-52 represented India in the United Nations between 1952 to 1962 Minister without Portfolio 1956-57 and for Defence 1957-62

19 (b. 1900) Sister of Jawaharlal Nehru Minister Congress Ministry U.P. 1937-39 represented India at the United Nations from 1946 to 1949 and in 1963 President U.N. General Assembly 1953-54 Ambassador to U.S.S.R. 1947-49 and to U.S.A. 1949-52 and High Commissioner in Britain 1954-61 Governor of Maharashtra 1962-64

20 (1908-1950) Son of Bhulabhai Desai Ambassador to Switzerland and Vatican 1947-50

21 On 23 March 1949

Frontier Province communique about the Red Shirts and India helping them ¹³ It was after considerable thought that I made that statement as I was afraid that my saying anything about the Red Shirts might lead to further suffering for them, and more misunderstanding all round But having kept myself in check for over a year, I felt the time had come when I should say something We have had no dealings with the Red Shirts since the partition but we have undoubtedly felt deeply for them and for their brave leaders who were our comrades in arms for so many years in the struggle for India's freedom

25 The relations of Pakistan with Afghanistan have deteriorated very greatly ¹⁴ The chief dispute between them is in regard to the tribal areas A statement on behalf of Pakistan that the tribal areas were integral parts of Pakistan, has led to vigorous protests from Afghanistan ¹⁵ There has apparently been bombing of these areas by the Pakistan Air Force ¹⁶ Our relations with Afghanistan are good

13 The N W F P communique of 14 March 1949 charged the Red Shirts of treason and conspiracy to murder the Premier On 19 March Nehru in Parliament described as false baseless and unwarranted the allegations that India was paying the Red Shirts large sums of money and receiving vital information from them about Kashmir He also expressed his distress at the manner in which the peaceful activities of the Khan brothers and the Khudai Khidmatgars were being suppressed

14 The tribals inhabiting the areas between the Durand line and the river Indus demanded the right of self determination so that a new separate State of Pathanistan could be formed Radio Kabul and the press also supported the tribals demand which provoked violent demonstrations in Pakistan

15 On 24 March the Afghanistan Government criticized the Pakistan Governor General's reference to the tribal areas as part of Pakistan during his tour of the Frontier Province as according to it this was contrary to all the pledges given by Jinnah in 1948 and also against the British Government's declaration of 3 June 1947 which had recognized the Frontier's independent status

16 Pakistan denied on 12 March that its military aircraft had bombed the tribal areas in Waziristan

Indeed we have no choice about this for if we do not do so and war or other calamities supervene then we face disaster. Again I would remind you that we must concentrate

- (i) on procurement
- (ii) on intensive cultivation so as to increase the yield per acre and
- (iii) on schemes which yield rapid results

31 I feel that in some provinces at least, enough has not been done in regard to procurement and local conditions are considered more important than all India ones. I trust that every province will realise that in this matter it is only all India considerations that must prevail and that there must be uniformity in procedure and practice all over India. I should like to congratulate Bombay province on their procurement.

32 We have invited Lord Boyd Orr²⁴ who used to be the Chairman of the F A O to visit India soon to advise us about our food problems. He is a great expert and enthusiastic about helping India in this matter. We may also get some other experts from abroad. But essentially the responsibility is ours and what is necessary is for us to throw all our energy into this business. This means not only governmental energy but Congress energy. We can change the whole atmosphere of the country if we could concentrate on these constructive activities.

33 In regard to relief and rehabilitation and more especially the latter it seems to me that we should think in terms of setting up some autonomous boards in each province to deal with problems of rehabilitation. These boards should be small and should consist of experts. The work should be taken out of the day-to-day activities of government and dealt with as a non-political activity on an expert level. Such boards could be given

²⁴ (1880-1971) British specialist on nutrition. Director General Food and Agriculture Organisation 1945-48. awarded Nobel Peace Prize 1949.

resources I propose to make a statement in Parliament soon on the subject of participation of foreign capital in India ²² Even before knowing what this is, some newspapers have started shouting against it. It amazes me how irresponsibly some of our newspapers function. This statement on foreign capital will be in line with the policy we have frequently declared. We wish to encourage foreign capital in India, subject always to the vital consideration of our not creating any vested interests here which might come in our way, and subject always to the primary consideration of advancing India's interests.

28 It has been decided also to appoint a Fiscal Commission ²³

29 I have a feeling and I think it is justified by various events, that the industrial situation in India is on the mend and that the psychology of the country in this matter is definitely favourable now. I think we shall go ahead fairly fast, provided we do not fritter our energies over minor matters and petty conflicts. We are playing for high stakes in this country and the world and we dare not do so in a small and petty way.

30 The food situation requires constant care and I am glad to notice a fixed determination all round to make India self sufficient in regard to food in the course of the next two years.

²² On 6 April, Nehru declared that the existing foreign interests would not be subjected to discriminatory restrictions: the facilities for remittance of profits earned in India would be continued and in the event of any foreign enterprise being compulsorily acquired, due compensation would be paid. While welcoming the participation of British capital in the development of the country's economy, the statement clarified that till such time as Indians became fully trained, the foreign technicians would continue to be employed.

²³ On 20 April 1949, the Ministry of Commerce announced the setting up of a Fiscal Commission for planning the country's long term tariff policy to suit the needs of independent India so that unfair competition was avoided and there was better utilization of the country's resources without imposing any burden on the consumer. The Commission, under the chairmanship of V. T. Krishnamachari, presented its report in 1950.

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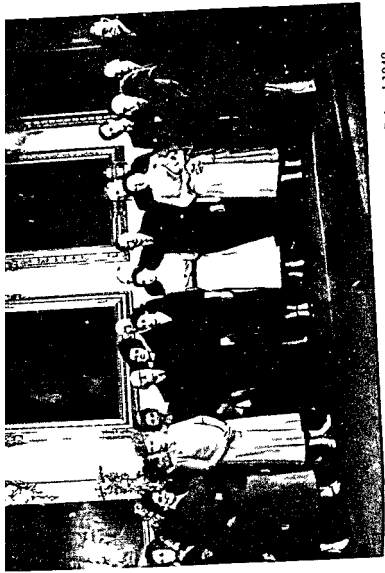
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larger financial powers so that they can exercise their initiative. Of course they would be under the supervision and control of the governments to whom they will report from time to time. Provinces must remember that the Centre's resources are limited and it is quite impossible for us even with the best will in the world to supply unlimited funds.

34 I should like to draw your attention to one more point. There has been a tendency even among Congressmen and our friends to talk a great deal about the corruption and incompetence of governments. Well, I have little doubt that there is corruption and there is incompetence and there is wastage. We are trying hard to combat all these and I think we are succeeding though slowly. It seems to me however that this business of condemnation is very much overdone. I think we can compare favourably with most countries. Continuous condemnation actually leads to a feeling of lethargy and produces the very atmosphere in which corruption etc flourish. There is a tendency to repeat every rumour without any attempt to verify it and so all kinds of vague and unjustified allegations float about from person to person. No responsible individual should allow himself to be a party to this kind of thing which is highly injurious to the nation. Let us by all means fight every evil but let us also recognise that all is not evil and there is plenty of good and that in fact we are progressing pretty well. I do believe this and have reasons for doing so. Condemnation of our services is also not only unjustified but unwise. We should take action against malefactors but not condemn whole groups. We have inherited this from the past but in the present context it has little place and only demoralises the services from whom we expect good work.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru



At Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference London 27 April 1949



With Rajendra Prasad Sardar Patel and other members at a meeting of the
Constituent Assembly 1949

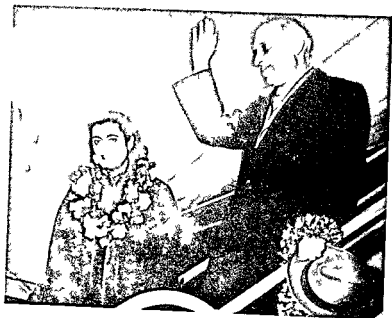
New Delhi
16 April 1949

My dear Premier

I am writing this letter to you on the eve of my departure for England for the conference of Dominion Prime Ministers. I shall be away for a little over two weeks. I hope to return in time for the Governors' Conference which is fixed for May 8th in New Delhi. That date limits the period of my absence abroad. Apart from my visit to England, I hope to spend two or three days at Berne in Switzerland.

2 The Prime Ministers' Conference in London is being held primarily to consider the situation created by new developments in India. The decision to make India a sovereign republic affects the whole structure of the Commonwealth and raises important questions. If India is to go out of the Commonwealth, then of course no particular difficulty arises in maintaining the present Commonwealth structure for the countries continuing to remain in it. But the Commonwealth minus India will naturally be a very different thing from what it has been. If on the other hand India as a Republic continues in the Commonwealth, then a new element is introduced into it which has thus far been absent. This is the important question to be decided in London and it has a certain historic significance apart from its practical consequences.

3 Generally speaking, it may be said that most Commonwealth countries, including the United Kingdom, are eager to have India continue in the Comm^{on}wealth. But they



Departure from U S A 7 November 1949

regard to the King it has been suggested that he might be recognised as a symbol of this association of free nations

7 These are the questions at issue apart from minor details We have expressed our willingness to be associated in this way with the Commonwealth because we feel there are solid advantages to India and to the cause of world peace But in being so associated we cannot give up any vital thing that we stand for or accept the slightest limitations to our freedom in internal or external affairs Also I should like to make it perfectly clear again that we propose to adhere to our policy of not lining up with any power bloc Some people think that Commonwealth association necessarily means a lining up That of course is completely wrong We have been upto now in the Commonwealth in fact we have been a Dominion Yet we have maintained the freedom of our foreign policy In

have been rather troubled by the consequences which might flow from a Republic's inclusion in it. Thus far a common allegiance to the King has been supposed to be a binding factor. A Republican India cannot owe allegiance to the King.

4 You may have noticed what Field Marshal Smuts¹ said some days ago about this question.² He seemed to think that a Republic cannot be a member of the Commonwealth. Some such indication also comes from comments in Pakistan. It would almost appear that South Africa and Pakistan would unlike other Dominions prefer India to be outside the Commonwealth.

5 Our own position in India has been clearly stated on many occasions. Minor details might not have been worked out but the basic approach has been the same for a long period. This approach is that India must be a sovereign Republic with full control of her internal and external policy; that the Indian citizen will owe allegiance to India and to no external authority; that subject to the above we would like to be associated with the Commonwealth of Nations (which incidentally can no longer be called the British Commonwealth).

6 All this is more or less agreed to. Yet in working it out some difficulties have arisen. Apart from a declaration of being in the Commonwealth, what other feasible links are present which might be considered as such in international law. One suggestion has been, and this has been generally accepted, that some kind of rather vague Commonwealth citizenship on reciprocal basis of each country should be provided for. In

1 Jan Christian Smuts (1870-1950) South African soldier and politician, Prime Minister 1919-1924 and 1939-1948. Field Marshal 1941.

2 On 9 April Smuts criticized India for trying to retain Commonwealth membership without owing allegiance to the Crown. In his view there was no middle course between the Crown and a Republic "you are either in the Commonwealth or out of it."

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8 I should like to remind you that the principles governing the policy I have enunciated above have been stated repeatedly and have been approved not only in Parliament but by the National Congress at Jaipur. The subject has been fully discussed in the press and elsewhere and every aspect of it has been considered. Therefore I go to London after the fullest consideration of the problem in India and knowing generally what our people think.

9 In my last letter I drew your attention to the vast changes that are taking place in Asia more particularly the course of developments in China. India being in a sense a pivotal point of Asia will necessarily be greatly influenced by all these developments. The next three to six months may well see these big changes taking shape and it is of the utmost importance

that a strong and stable India should face the world during these critical times. We have had recently with us K M Panikkar our Ambassador in China who has given us a full report of the situation there. He is returning today to Nanking. We have also had Vijayalakshmi Pandit till recently our Ambassador in Moscow and now our Ambassador designate in Washington. Her experience in Moscow, and more especially at several sessions of the United Nations, has brought her in intimate touch with international affairs and the situation in Europe and America. Consultations with her are therefore helpful to us in understanding recent developments. She will be going to Washington towards the end of this month.

10 We held an informal conference recently in Delhi in regard to Indonesia.³ This was in continuation of the conference on Indonesia held in New Delhi in January last and representatives of the countries participating in that conference attended. We came to no formal decisions but certain recommendations were made to our respective governments. It is clear that the Dutch have failed to carry out the directions given by the Security Council and the latter has been very gentle to them. We have long felt that a stronger line would have been not only right in itself but more practical. We have pressed for this both in public and in private. But we have wished to avoid doing anything which might queer the pitch for the Security Council and which might go beyond the wishes of the Indonesian Republic. The position has been a difficult one.

3 At the meeting on 13 April attended by Afghanistan, Australia, Burma, China, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand, it was agreed that efforts should be continued in accordance with the Security Council's resolution of 28 January for a prompt and satisfactory settlement of the Indonesian problem.

requiring very careful handling. Even as I write this a conference is going to take place in Batavia ⁴

11 Thakin Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, paid a brief visit to me two days ago and we discussed fully and frankly the situation in Burma. Thakin Nu is an old friend for whom I have great admiration. He is unlike the normal politician and his ways are straight and forthright. He has a very high reputation for integrity. It is fortunate for Burma that he is the Prime Minister there and if any one person can create stability and security in Burma and put her on the path of progress it is Thakin Nu. The situation in Burma is a difficult one but it is clear to me that the only alternative to Thakin Nu's Government there is chaos. No other group or individual is capable of controlling the situation. We are naturally interested in Burma not only because the fate of large numbers of Indians is involved but also because what happens in Burma will have a powerful effect on India and all over South East Asia.

12 While a certain improvement in our relations with Pakistan continues and evidence of this is a recent trade agreement ⁵ the tone of the Pakistan press continues to be bad. I am afraid we in India have some newspapers and periodicals which are completely irresponsible and make extraordinary statements. But I must say that some newspapers in Pakistan are infinitely worse. I have before me extracts from a daily

4 At the meeting between the Dutch and the Republicans at Batavia from 15 April to 7 May 1949 the Dutch agreed to (1) allow Republicans to return to Jogjakarta (2) cease hostilities (3) release all prisoners (4) let Republicans retain the areas held by them and (5) convene a round table conference at The Hague. The Republicans also agreed to stop guerrilla fighting and participate in the conference at The Hague.

5 The agreement signed on 4 April removed tariff and other restrictions on Inter Dominion trade. India agreed to withdraw excise duties on export of sugar matches and textiles and Pakistan agreed to withdraw such duties on raw jute.

newspaper published in Hyderabad Sind This reports that rumours are current to the effect

- (1) Patel has been arrested by Nehru
- (2) Nehru has been killed by the Sanghis
- (3) Revolt started in India
- (4) Amanullah⁶ has reached Patiala
- (5) Amanullah attacking Delhi
- (6) Earthquake in Delhi resulting in the death of vast numbers of Sikhs and Hindus, and so on

This is fantastic in the extreme But even other newspapers are pretty bad and the kind of rumours that are spread in Pakistan take one's breath away This shows the atmosphere in which the average citizen of Pakistan lives Can we blame him if he gets completely wrong ideas about India and the world?

13 You will remember that I made a statement repudiating certain insinuations contained in a statement by the Premier⁷ of the North West Frontier Province⁸ I referred to the Red Shirts in the statement also I had long refrained from referring to these old colleagues of ours because I felt that any reference by me might lead to greater repression of them But the latest developments in the Frontier Province compelled me not only to clear our position but also to say what I had in my heart in regard to the Red Shirts or Khudai Khidmatgars There is no doubt that these gallant colleagues of ours in the past have had to put up with extreme repression and conditions in the Frontier Province are bad So also are conditions in the tribal

6 (1892-1960) King of Afghanistan 1919-1929 thereafter lived in exile in Italy and Switzerland

7 Abdul Qayyum Khan (1901-1981) Member Indian Legislative Assembly 1937-46 Deputy leader Congress Party in Assembly 1942-45 joined Muslim League 1945 and led a movement in N W F P to oust Khan Sahib's Ministry 1946 Chief Minister N W F P 1947-1953 President Pakistan Muslim League 1957-58 active as opposition leader 1962-69 Minister for the Interior 1972-77

8 See *ante* p 316

areas Last year there was indiscriminate shooting down of Red Shirts in the Frontier Province and extensive and intensive bombing from the air of the tribal areas

14 All this created a powerful effect in Afghanistan To add to this statements were made by responsible people in Pakistan that the tribal areas were integral parts of Pakistan During the British period this was not so and the tribal areas were called independent territory and occupied a special position under some kind of suzerainty of the British power Afghanistan always laid some kind of a claim to them The declaration by the Governor General of Pakistan⁹ and others that the tribal areas were integral parts of Pakistan infuriated Afghanistan and there has been a tremendous anti Pakistan agitation in Afghanistan since then On the other hand in the Frontier Province and elsewhere in Pakistan efforts are being made to bring in Amanullah into the picture and to discredit the present Ruler¹⁰ and authorities in Afghanistan¹¹ Indeed the other day, it was stated that Afghanistan should become part of Pakistan¹² Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan are thus very strained and the Afghan Ambassador, and most of his staff at Karachi have gone back to Kabul We are naturally bound by our commitments in the past and we have no desire to interfere in other people's business But we cannot help being interested in what happens at the old frontier of India, for that affects our own defence We also cannot help being

9 Khwaja Nazimuddin (1894-1964) Minister for Education in Bengal 1929-34 leader of Muslim League Parliamentary Party Bengal 1942-43 Premier Bengal 1943-45 Chief Minister East Pakistan 1947 Governor General of Pakistan 1948-51 Prime Minister 1951-53

10 Muhammad Zahir Shah (b 1914) King of Afghanistan 1933-73

11 In Quetta Pakistan radio had started a Radio Free Afghanistan service to propagate the return of Amanullah to Kabul as King But on 6 April Amanullah in a statement denied that he had any intention of returning to Kabul

12 On 11 April the Premier of N W F P said that the day must come when the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan would embrace each other to form one powerful Muslim State as it should be between India and Russia

interested in the fate of the people of the Frontier Province who played such a gallant part in our struggle for freedom. If they ask for autonomy we sympathise with them. All kinds of wild rumours are spread in Pakistan about our pouring in money in the Frontier Province or tribal areas of Afghanistan. These rumours are completely false. It is true, however, that our relations with Afghanistan are very friendly.

15 The position in regard to Kashmir continues to be complicated and in a sense fluid. The United Nations Commission has worked in a rather leisurely manner and we have yet to arrive at the truce agreement. There are some vital differences of opinion between us and Pakistan in regard to the conditions governing the truce. Meanwhile it is said that Admiral Nimitz¹³ who has been selected to be a Plebiscite Administrator will come to India early next month. In accordance with the resolution of the Security Council he cannot function as a Plebiscite Administrator till many other things have been done. So that if he comes it will be more or less as an informal adviser and to study the situation. Our position remains what it was. We have accepted the plebiscite but we have made it quite clear as to what should happen before the plebiscite can be thought of. Unless those conditions are fulfilled there can be no proper plebiscite. In any event it seems very difficult for any plebiscite to be held in another fifteen or eighteen months. What will happen during this fairly long period I do not know. But much will no doubt happen.

16 You may have seen reports of Pakistani incursions into our territory in Kashmir. Separately taken these are not of great import but taken together they do show an aggressive mentality and something very contrary to the mental climate of a truce. Statements and press comments in Pakistan also

13 Chester Williams Nimitz (1885-1966) Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas 1941-45. Chief of Naval Operations 1945-47. Special Assistant to Secretary U.S. Navy 1947-49. Later served as ambassador on behalf of the United Nations.

continue to be most aggressive. Among other things we have made it clear that we will not tolerate any exploitation of religion or religious propaganda in connection with the plebiscite¹⁴. And yet this is just the type of propaganda that Pakistan continually indulges in. Sheikh Abdullah, the Prime Minister of Kashmir, has throughout repudiated the two nation theory of the Muslim League and has refused to permit any propaganda which encourages communalism or religious bigotry.

17 The food situation is constantly being attended to. At our request Lord Boyd Orr is visiting India to advise us. He was till lately the head of the F A O and is one of the greatest authorities on the subject. For the present he is coming for three weeks but I hope he will be able to come for some months later in the year. It is possible that he might visit some provincial centres during his visit. I trust that all provincial and state governments will give full assistance to Lord Boyd Orr.

18 We have long talked of planning and of setting up a planning authority but owing to various reasons no definite step to this end has been taken. We have however during the last few months set up an Economic Committee of the Cabinet, an Economic Adviser¹⁵, a Statistical Adviser¹⁶ and a Committee of Economists and Statisticians. I think that in the course of the next two months or so we shall have to give more concentrated attention to this business of planning. It is easy enough to set up some board or commission. I have refrained from doing this because I have noticed that boards and commissions and committees are appointed before the time is ripe for them and before they could do much. All that happens is that an additional office is created and then we want staff for it and

14 See *ante* p. 266

15 Gyan Chand (1893-1983) Professor of Economics at Banaras Hindu University. Economic Adviser to the Central Cabinet. 1949-51

16 P. C. Mahalanobis (1893-1972) Physicist and statistician, member of the Planning Commission. 1955-67

accommodation etc. I would rather proceed more cautiously and more firmly. The question is a peculiar and intricate one requiring the fullest cooperation from provinces and states. Probably later on we shall address you on this subject and make some proposals.

19 Dr Gyan Chaudhary who is attached to the Prime Minister's Secretariat here proposes to visit a number of provincial headquarters with a view to collect factual information and study the provincial governments' plans about future developments. His purpose is not to give any advice or lay down any policy but just to collect data and to know more intimately what the provincial schemes are. I shall be grateful if assistance is given to him wherever he goes.

20 You have been informed of our Labour Ministry's scheme for industrial housing.¹⁷ The question of having legislation to enforce the employers' contribution is being considered and the views of provincial governments have been asked for. It is clear that in this as in other matters provincial cooperation is essential.

21 I wrote to you previously about the reactions of the representatives of the International Monetary Fund during their visit to India. We have received some further information on this subject and again they lay stress on certain lack of coordination between the provinces and the Centre more especially in regard to food, transport and power. Further they seem to be of opinion that while the Centre and the provinces had ambitious development plans there was no clear appreciation of the picture as a whole and there was danger of trying to run in all directions and to run too fast. It was

¹⁷ To provide a million houses for industrial workers in ten years as announced in the Industrial Policy resolution of 1948, the Central Government announced a scheme to grant interest free house building loans to workers to cover two-thirds of the cost of construction, subject to the rest being met by the employers or the state governments.

essential they thought to fix priorities. This question of coordination between the Centre and the provinces is assuming even greater importance than in the past.

22 A few days ago I had the pleasure to meet a number of Premiers at a meeting called by our Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation in New Delhi.¹⁸ We discussed the problem of displaced persons, their dispersal in various provinces and other plans for their rehabilitation. Many of the Premiers present gave us the benefit of their advice. I must confess that I was rather depressed by this conference. I have a sensation that each province was thinking of itself and not caring over much for India as a whole. There was a strong reluctance to what was considered as interference from the Centre in regard to this matter. Yet it has to be remembered that it is the Centre that pays for rehabilitation. All that was considered necessary was for the Centre to go on paying but not interfering. Further many provinces were not at all eager to take any large number of displaced persons even though the Centre paid. At the present moment Delhi, both old and new, has a population of over half a million displaced persons. That is bad for Delhi, for Delhi, being the Capital, is rapidly becoming the nerve centre of India, and we cannot afford to have anything going wrong at the nerve centre. West Bengal is full of refugees from East Bengal. Unless other provinces help Delhi and West Bengal the result is that far too many people congregate in these two places and it is quite impossible to absorb them there. There is no solution of the problem except by the full cooperation of the provinces and states. The burden shared becomes lighter.

23 Some time ago I suggested that provincial governments might well appoint some autonomous boards to look after rehabilitation of displaced persons. Subsequently a very moderate proposal was put forward that each provincial government should have a small Cabinet Committee, as at the Centre, specially in charge of rehabilitation. I was surprised to

find reluctance on the part of provincial governments to adopt either course although it seems to me that any such problem must be tackled separately and not left to the routine of government work. I fear there is little realisation in many provinces of the burden and great difficulties of this problem of rehabilitating vast numbers of displaced persons. Only those provinces which have got nearly the whole burden on their backs realise its importance. I must appeal to you to view this problem in its all India aspect.

24 We can never forget that the stability and security of India can only be considered as an all India problem. One weak link weakens that stability. We have passed through great crises and overcome great difficulties. Perhaps because we have done so we are apt to be complacent and to fit into the ruts of normal government procedure. That is not to be commended. May I remind you that we live in an extraordinary moment of the world's history and of Asia's and India's history when revolutionary changes of enormous significance are unfolding themselves before our eyes. We cannot afford to be complacent or to think in terms of ordinary routine work in solving urgent problems. We have to be alert and open to fresh ideas and capable of adapting ourselves to changing circumstances and new problems.

25 The question has arisen about communal proportions in the services.¹⁹ This is one of the unfortunate legacies of a past age. Perhaps we cannot suddenly do away with them. But I think we should always bear in mind that all this business of communalism has to go and we should therefore endeavour to lessen the existing evil wherever we can. The right approach is not a communal approach but an approach to help backward classes to come up to the level of others.

19 The British policy of reservation of posts for religious minorities was converted after independence into reservation only for the scheduled castes and tribes and for Anglo-Indians in certain categories of services for a period not exceeding ten years after the inauguration of the new Constitution.

26 You are aware that Shri H P Mody²⁰ has been appointed Governor of the United Provinces. The functions of a Governor have changed greatly since August 1947. He is now a constitutional Governor and the responsibilities for all decisions rests with his Ministry. But it is not correct to think that the Governor is just a social figure head and no more. He has vital functions to perform and a good Governor can make a great difference to a province. He can help to smooth over difficulties which often arise. Being above parties he can help in bringing people together.

27 Recently there have been two changes in provincial ministries—in Madras²¹ and the East Punjab²². Changes in ministries due to any political cause may well represent a healthy organism. But these changes are due to private faction and personal considerations and they indicate an inner weakness. I regret that this personal element has been in evidence in some places not only in governments but also in the Congress organisation. If we cannot rise above this we shall not only sink ourselves but carry others with us.

28 You are aware that we are giving up the use of titles in our official work in so far as Indians are concerned. I think this practice of not using titles should be extended as far as possible. In a limited number of cases titles perhaps will have to be used for the present. For instance when a reference is made to the King it seems courteous and desirable that a title which originated from the King should be used. But otherwise there seems to be no necessity. In invitations issued for official

20 (1881-1969) Businessman of Bombay, member Central Legislative Assembly 1929-43, member Viceroy's Executive Council 1941-43, Acting Governor of Bombay 1947, Governor of U P 1949-52, later joined Swatantra Party.

21 On 6 April P. S. Kumaraswami Raja replaced O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar as Premier and formed a new Ministry.

22 B. H. Menon formed a new Cabinet on 6 April 1949 after he replaced Gopi Chand Bhargava as the Premier.

functions even though these are social parties at Government Houses these titles might well be left out

29 I must confess to you that I am worried on account of the deterioration in our general educational system. There is a high powered Education Commission²³ at work now and no doubt their recommendations will be valuable. But it seems pretty obvious that standards are lower than they were and this is a dangerous tendency. While salaries and wages have a strong tendency to increase in government offices and elsewhere the salaries of professors in the universities and teachers in the schools compare badly with official salaries. I know that it is no easy matter to increase these salaries because of our financial difficulty. But we must realise that whatever else happens we cannot afford to lower our educational standards.

30 One of the most deplorable features of the present day is the extraordinary mentality of some of our students. I do not mind exuberance among students or even aggressiveness. I like vitality but what I do not like is the demands made for lower standards in passes for hunger strikes because fees have been slightly raised for a demand that a student should be represented in university commissions and the like. This is an extraordinary approach. The other day at one university a suggestion was put forward on the part of students that because of a visit of an eminent person a number of failed students should be passed.²⁴ It is our misfortune that we have in the past attached importance to examinations and degrees as such. The sooner we get rid of this idea the better. If there is a way of doing away with examinations I would welcome it. But I do not myself see how this can be done. Anyhow all this indicates not a desire to fit oneself for shouldering responsibilities but

²³ On 4 November 1948 the Ministry of Education had set up an Education Commission under the chairmanship of Prof. S. Radhakrishnan.

²⁴ The students of Osmania University in Hyderabad had asked for this when Sardar Patel addressed the convocation at the University on 26 February 1949.

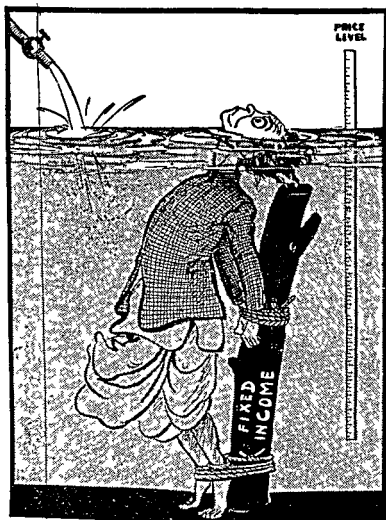
somehow or other to get a label without necessarily having any qualifications for anything. We cannot permit this drift. Some students imagine that this is democracy. That is a very strange delusion.

31 One of the saddest events of the last fortnight has been the sudden death of Dr. Birbal Sahni²⁵ a brilliant scientist and one from whom much was hoped in India. Only a few days before his death I laid the foundation stone of an institute of palaeobotany in Lucknow²⁶. This was essentially his creation and he had devoted all his fortune and his valuable collections to it. He had just been elected President of a Botanical Congress to be held in Stockholm. His death is a very serious loss not only to science in India but to the world of science.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

²⁵ (1891-1949) Botanist. Fellow of the Royal Society. President of Indian Science Congress 1940. Founder Director of the Institute of Palaeobotany Lucknow.

²⁶ On 3 April 1949.



By courtesy of Shankar's Weekly 11 July 1948

New Delhi
16 April, 1949

My dear Premier,*

At the recent conference of Premiers¹ held in New Delhi the question of the Communist Party was discussed. It was considered whether the Communist Party should be banned or not. The matter has been considered by the Central Cabinet and the Deputy Prime Minister placed the views of provincial Premiers before our Cabinet.

2 The Cabinet was of opinion that any step in the nature of banning the Communist Party in India should be avoided at present.

3 No one is in any doubt about the highly injurious activities of the Communist Party of India. Those activities, as I have stated in Parliament,² have bordered on open revolt and have increasingly taken the shape of sabotage or even terrorism. Because of this the Central Government and the provincial governments have taken strong action against the members of the Communist Party of India. That action will continue so long as the situation necessitates it.

4 The question is whether banning the Party in India will in the balance have more favourable results and will strengthen the hands of government or not. To some extent, it may be said

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 On 8-9 April 1949

2 On 28 February 1949

that banning gives a free hand to the authorities to deal with subversive elements. On the other hand, that free hand has been given to the authorities and widespread action has been taken. The Communist Party of India, though not illegal, is in effect functioning more or less as an underground organisation with a public facade. Banning will not make much difference to this and the underground activities will only be intensified.

5 A fact always to remember and to bring out is that the Communist Party members in India are following the policy of sabotage and terrorism. If we ban the Party this aspect of sabotage and terrorism will rather fade out from people's minds and it will be thought that the banning is due to ideological reasons. Communists here, and elsewhere, will stand up as defenders of a certain ideology and will try to hide under that cloak their subversive and terroristic activities. It is most important that we should distinguish between these two and should lay stress on their present policy of sabotage and terrorism and not allow them to shift the point of attack.

6 There are two matters which specially concern us—the question of sabotage and how to deal with virulent newspaper propaganda of the Communists. As for sabotage, this is a secret activity and banning does not help at all. As for newspapers, action should be taken against individual newspapers wherever necessary. I think there has been a certain laxity in regard to this in the past.³ What happens now is that if a newspaper is suppressed or banned, another one sometimes takes its place under a different name. This position also cannot be dealt with by banning because new names will appear.

7 Generally speaking therefore, banning does not give any greater powers to deal with an organisation which is essentially functioning underground. The slight balance in favour of

³ For example the *People's Age* an official organ of the Communist Party had not been banned by the Bombay Government till this time though its editorial staff had been arrested.

banning is rather outweighed by Communists posing as ideological martyrs instead of saboteurs and terrorists

8 In particular, at the present moment, when I am going to England for an important conference, and in view of the tremendous developments that are taking place in China, we have to be a little wary of any steps we take which may affect the international situation adversely to us

9 These were some of the reasons which the Cabinet had before it in coming to its decision. Of course no such decisions are final and any matter can be considered again whenever it is thought that necessity arises. I thought I should write to you and give you the background of our discussion instead of merely communicating that decision itself

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
14 May, 1949

My dear Premier,

I missed writing the beginning of the month fortnightly letter for the obvious reason that I was in London then.¹ About the London meeting of Prime Ministers,² I shall not write anything in this letter, as I have dealt with the subject fully on other occasions.³ In another two days time I shall be addressing the Constituent Assembly on this subject,⁴ and somewhat later, the All India Congress Committee.⁵ Therefore, I shall spare you a long account here. But I am enclosing a note I have written on this subject for some of my colleagues here.⁶

1 Nehru returned to India on 7 May 1949

2 It was agreed at the Prime Ministers' Conference on 27 April that India could remain as a full and equal member of the Commonwealth of Nations even after she became a Republic. India accepted the King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth. The members of the Commonwealth were "free and equal" with no commitments in policy but freely cooperating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress.

3 Explaining the London Conference decision on Commonwealth membership, Nehru said in a broadcast on 10 May that in so far as the Constitution of India is concerned the King has no place and we shall owe no allegiance to him. On the following day he stated that the association with the Commonwealth would also prove economically advantageous to India besides giving a certain psychological advantage to India in her desire to promote peace in the world.

4 The Constituent Assembly unanimously ratified the London agreement on 17 May.

5 The A I C C meeting in Dehra Dun on 21-22 May also approved the Government's decision.

6 Not p^r

2 I visited Dublin⁷ and Switzerland⁸ also during my brief stay abroad. I was very glad to go to Dublin and I met with warm hearted cordiality there from the President⁹ the Prime Minister¹⁰ and other Ministers as well as Mr De Valera¹¹ and other leaders of the Opposition. I was asked to sit with the members of the Dail after a resolution passed by the Dail. This was a signal and unique honour. I have always felt in common with so many of my countrymen very friendly towards the Irish who have had so many experiences similar to ours in *their long struggle for freedom*. I had occasion to have frank and full talks with Mr Costello the Prime Minister of Ireland. As you perhaps know we have accredited a Minister to Ireland our High Commissioner in London being the Minister. At the request of the Irish Government we are raising the status of our Legation in Dublin to that of an Embassy. This will make no other difference as our High Commissioner in London will become our Ambassador in Dublin also.

3 Both in Dublin and in various places of Switzerland what pleased me greatly was not merely the governmental welcome but the popular welcome that I was privileged to receive¹². Crowds of common folk gathered in the streets wherever I went and gave a cheer. *For the Swiss who are not easily excitable* this was uncommon behaviour.

7 On 28 April 1949

8 From 3 to 5 May 1949

9 Sean Thomas O Kelly (1883 1966) Irish political leader. President of the Republic of Ireland 1945-59

10 John Aloysius Costello (1891 1976) Prime Minister of Ireland 1948 51. Leader of the Opposition in Dail Eireann 1951 54. Prime Minister 1954 57. Leader of the Opposition 1957 59

11 Eamon de Valera (1882 1975) Outstanding Irish leader. Lord Lieutenant 1916 21. President of the Executive Council 1932 37. Prime Minister 1937 48 1951 54 and 1957 59. Leader of the Opposition 1948 51 and 1954 57. President of Ireland 1959 73

12 Nehru received the unprecedented honour of being welcomed in the House and seated along with the members of the Treasury benches

4 I visited and inspected our Legation in Berne and both from my inspection and general reports I found that it was working satisfactorily. Our Minister Shri Dhurajlal Desai is exceedingly popular in Switzerland and has undoubtedly served India well. His chief colleague the Counsellor Shri A C N Nambiar¹³ has also been doing his work with efficiency and success. Indeed I was glad to find a happy team of workers cooperating with each other. Switzerland though a small country is an important centre because of its central situation in Europe. It is also of course a great tourist centre and many Indian visitors go there. The Legation has thus to deal with a great variety of work. Sometimes in foreign countries Indian visitors are apt to demand far too much attention from our Legations and Embassies. They do get attention and help and I am sure Indian travellers abroad are much better placed because of this than they were previously. Apart from physical comforts and conveniences there is a certain thrill now for an Indian to go to his Embassy or Legation and to see the flag of India bravely flying there or to hear our national anthem played. This anthem which as you know for the present is *Jana Gana Mana* has already found a definite place in foreign countries and has elicited universal admiration. It is generally believed that its tune is one of the finest of all national anthems of other countries.

5 I should like to tell you also how our air service—Air India International—has helped to increase the prestige of India abroad. This service is now acknowledged to be the best in every way of all the international services which fly between Europe and India. Indians abroad have told me that to see this huge aircraft with the Indian flag coming down in a foreign airport always gives a thrill of pride and pleasure.

13 (b 1896) Worked for freedom movement in Europe for many years and later joined Subhas Chandra Bose in Germany. Counsellor in Berne 1948-51. Minister in Sweden, Denmark and Finland 1953-55. Ambassador to West Germany 1955-59.

considered Our desire has always been and is to retain the friendship of the Chinese people and to cooperate with them as far as possible That will be our guiding principle

10 The lifting of the Berlin blockade does not solve the problems of Europe But undoubtedly it is an event to be welcomed and it eases the tension in Europe It may perhaps be a forerunner of a progressive improvement in international relations and in particular in the rivalry between the great power groups One should not build hopes too high for the causes of conflict are deep and fear and suspicion on either side will not easily disappear But something encouraging to the lovers of peace has happened and we should welcome it

11 Regarding Indonesia the agreement that has recently been signed is not anything to enthuse over chiefly because much has been left vague in it and it is always dangerous in such matters to be vague Nevertheless I think we should welcome it for it is always a good thing to get out of a deadlock I think it is widely recognised all over the world and even by the Dutch that Indonesia must be free and further that it is the Indonesian Republic that must have a leading position there

12 May I add that for a long time past we have played a fairly important part in Indonesian developments Little of this is mentioned in the press and we do not want it so mentioned But we have all along been in the closest touch with the Republican leaders and I think we may justly claim to have helped them considerably in many ways and more especially in the international field We have been in more senses than one the window of Indonesia to the world That window was very helpful especially after the Dutch blockade Our relations have grown progressively closer during these very difficult days in Indonesia and we shall continue this close relationship Some people ignorant of what is happening and given to daydreams criticise us for our Indonesian policy As a matter of fact we

have done nothing without the consultation of the Republican leaders. Indeed the Foreign Minister¹⁷ of the Emergency Government of the Indonesian Republic has been functioning from New Delhi.

13 Burma continues to be a scene of civil conflict. While I was in London a conference was held at the instance of the U.K. Prime Minister to consider the situation in Burma.¹⁸ While we were not anxious or even desirous of being entangled in the Burmese conflict we were anxious to help in bringing about peace and order there. To India this was of special importance both because Burma is a border country and because of the 8 00 000 Indians resident in Burma. Any great upheaval there might result in the Indians having to leave Burma. One can well imagine what a terrific problem this would represent to us and how much human misery this would mean. We have been long convinced that Thakin Nu's Government and indeed Thakin Nu himself personally more than anyone else is the only possible government which can bring about peace and some measure of stability in Burma in the relatively near future. Others are small groups with no clear policies or principles except the policy of opposition and rebellion. If unfortunately Thakin Nu's Government collapses the result will not be some other stable government but simply chaos and anarchy. So by stress of circumstances we are compelled to be interested in the success of Thakin Nu's Government. At the same time we wish to avoid anything in the nature of a military entanglement.

17 Dr. Amrin Sartono Maramis

18 The communique issued simultaneously from New Delhi and London on 11 May stated that the Premiers of Great Britain, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka had agreed on 28 April to extend support for the restoration of law and order in Burma. On the following day the Government of Burma explained that while they had no intention of joining the Commonwealth they had accepted aid from the four Commonwealth countries.

14 The conference held in London by some Commonwealth Prime Ministers decided that some help should be given to the Burmese Government without entanglement as far as possible. We have asked our respective Ambassadors in Rangoon to form a committee keeping in touch with the Burmese Government and informing us of the situation and of what supplies are necessary. The burden will inevitably fall largely on the U K. It is interesting to note that in spite of all these troubles in Burma rice procurement has been more or less successful thus far.

15 As I write this letter the Indian question in South Africa is before the U N General Assembly.¹⁹ What the final result will be I do not know. But it seems clear that a considerable majority are inclined to favour the Indian viewpoint with certain modifications. As you know I met Dr Malan²⁰ in London. I know well that meeting him will not solve this highly intricate problem. All we could do was to explain to each other our respective viewpoints clearly. In other words agree to differ for the time being. I felt that a frank and friendly talk would at least remove some obstructions and bitterness from the approach to this problem. That was about all that happened and otherwise we are where we were. Dr Malan was quite friendly but quite obdurate. We agreed that if either of us surrendered to the other we would have short shrift in our own country.

16 In spite of this absolute deadlock I think there is a deep realisation in the minds of many people that something has got to be done and some way found out before this problem assumes gigantic proportions as it well might. Indeed the recent terrible riots in Durban have made confusion worse

19 The General Assembly's resolution of 14 May called upon India, Pakistan and South Africa to settle the question of Indian settlers in South Africa through mutual discussions. Earlier India had withdrawn its resolution recommending the setting up of a U N Commission.

20 Daniel Francois Malan (1874-1959) Prime Minister of South Africa 1948-54.

confounded and made the position of Indians peculiarly difficult. Reports continue to reach us of tension as between Africans and Indians. I am afraid that the fault is not wholly on the African side always. Some of our Indian settlers there have shown extreme narrow mindedness in dealing with the situation and this continues to irritate the Africans. Our own policy all along has been for Indians to cooperate fully with the Africans and not to come in the way of their progress. Indeed there is no other possible policy for if we have not got the goodwill of the Africans in Africa there will be no place for Indians left there.

17 The recent failure of an Indian bank in East Africa has produced further complications. This may possibly lead to further tension between the Africans and Indians because a number of Africans may lose their deposits.

18 Our Deputy Foreign Minister Dr B V Keskar, has paid visits not only to our North East Frontier but also to several of our missions abroad in South East Asia. He has been to Saigon, Bangkok, Singapore and Rangoon and has presented us not only with full reports of the situation in these countries but also of the working of our missions. He has paid a compliment to our representatives abroad and to the work our missions are doing. In view of the many criticisms made about our foreign work it has been heartening to have these reports from Dr Keskar. Speaking with some knowledge of the subject of our foreign missions I can say that generally they have done remarkably well considering that we are beginners at this game and normally foreign missions take a long time to develop. There is of course a great deal of room for improvement, and there is some overlapping and some errors due to inexperience. But on the whole we have done very well and our missions abroad have a high reputation.

19 The Kashmir issue has given us a good many headaches during the past few weeks. The U N Commission has

presented to us some new proposals²¹ Anxious as we are to come to an agreement and to proceed peacefully to a settlement, there are certain limits beyond which we cannot go without endangering our position, both politically and militarily²² Subject to these vital modifications, we are prepared to go as far as possible There has been a great deal of loose talk about Kashmir in some newspapers Some people have written or talked about our poor chances in a plebiscite Some have even suggested that we should try to save Jammu, even though the rest goes²³ Some have criticised the Abdullah Government and laid stress on internal conflicts²⁴ I am astonished that this kind of irresponsible talk or writing should go on Of course, we have difficult problems in Kashmir but we are confident that we shall pull through This business of creating trouble and dissension and running our own people down is not becoming to any person who has a little intelligence or patriotism

20 Immediately on my return here I attended a conference of Governors²⁵ which His Excellency the Governor General had called This conference was very useful and the experienced members who attended helped us to understand in many ways the situation in the country As was natural the question of the relationship between the Governors and their Ministries was

21 The proposals of 28 April 1949 stipulated (1) withdrawal of their armies and nationals by both India and Pakistan (2) administration by the local authorities under the Commission's surveillance (3) the Commission be allowed to station garrisons in northern and other strategic areas in consultation with the Government of India and (4) removal of traffic restrictions in Kashmir state

22 India while rejecting on 18 May the U N proposals of 28 April demanded complete demobilization of 'Azad Kashmir' forces and asserted her right to maintain garrisons in northern areas and at all strategic points for the security of the state

23 The Jammu Praja Parishad was agitating at this time for a zonal plebiscite in Jammu

24 Among others even the Maharaja's brother in law had been circulating pamphlets vilifying Sheikh Abdullah and his government

25 On 8-9 May 1949

considered. There was no question of course of the Governor interfering with the work of the Ministry. He had to function as a constitutional Governor. At the same time it was pointed out that it would be undesirable and wasteful of talent if we did not utilise the Governor's experience. In the new Constitution that we are drawing up paragraph 8 of the 4th Schedule of the Draft Constitution is as follows

The Governor shall do all that in him lies to maintain standards of good administration to promote all measures making for moral social and economic welfare and tending to fit all classes of the population to take their due share in the public life and government of the State and to secure amongst all classes and creeds cooperation goodwill and mutual respect for religious beliefs and sentiments

That is of course only in the Draft Constitution thus far. It indicates however the mind of the Drafting Committee. Whether this paragraph is passed as it is or varied²⁶ it does seem the general intention is to treat the Governors as live persons who can help though without interfering. It should be desirable therefore for provincial Premiers and Ministers to keep Governors informed of all important matters relating to policy and administration and to consult them before any decision in respect of such matters is taken. This does not mean interference by the Governors and the views of the Ministry will no doubt prevail. All that it means is that we should take full advantage of the experienced and eminent man or woman who is the Governor before coming to final decisions in respect of major matters of policy and administration.

21 I think that there is one other way in which the Governors can be helpful and that is by touring. I do not mean the type of touring in which previous Governors indulged with great pomp

26 This paragraph was not included in the Constitution

and circumstance. A certain dignity of course has to be maintained in keeping with the high office otherwise we are likely to become sloppy. Governors' tours can be of great help to a Ministry from many points of view. A Governor naturally must support his government. Nevertheless he can support it as a person above parties and groups.

22 The law and order problem was of course discussed at length at the Governors' conference. It was clear that it was the primary duty of governments to maintain law and order and to meet any challenge made to it. As the Communist Party of India has made that challenge it had to be effectively met. Two points were however stressed. One was that we should try to keep apart the violence and sabotage part of the Communist Party's programme in India from their normal ideological approach. That is to say our action against the Communist Party members is because they indulge in violence and sabotage and openly say so in their circulars etc. and not because they hold certain opinions. It is important that this difference be made as otherwise some people might be misled into thinking that we are attacking a way of thinking and not violent activities against the State.

23 The second point that was mentioned was that while police and like measures are essential to meet with any challenge to the State it is even more necessary to have a positive policy to remove grievances and to keep in touch with the people. Unfortunately most of us have got so entangled in administrative or other duties that we tend to lose touch with the masses. This leaves them an easy prey for any kind of agitation. Therefore it is essential to develop full contacts with the masses to explain to them our difficulties and seek their cooperation also to have a definite and positive policy for their betterment.

24 It was further pointed out at the Governors' Conference that there was a tendency among provincial governments to rely

increasingly on the repressive aspect of the State in meeting difficult situations. While this was inevitable in certain circumstances it was not normally the best or the safest way of dealing with any matter. It is seldom that any idea or any really earnest person is crushed by repression as every Congressman knows by his own experience. We have thrived on repression. This has always to be kept in mind or else we shall get more and more entangled in a vicious circle. There have recently been firings as a result of which women have died.²⁷ Those women were actually behaving in a most violent manner and causing casualties on the side of the police. It becomes inevitable for the police to fire when they are themselves attacked. Nevertheless, *this business of women being shot at and killed, leaves a very bad taste in the minds of people and credit of governments does not go up in the eyes of people in India or abroad.* We have, therefore, to strike a balance and to keep vigilant that the police or others do not forget the importance of dealing with situations as far as possible without adopting these extreme measures.

25 You have all seen the report of the three man committee on linguistic provinces appointed by the Jaipur Congress.²⁸ This report has been considered by our Cabinet here and generally approved. In particular, the Cabinet was of opinion that this whole question of the formation of new provinces or of rectification of provincial boundaries should be postponed and

27 Seven persons including four women were killed in police firing in Calcutta in April when there was a demonstration organised against the West Bengal Government's attitude towards the demands of the political prisoners on hunger strike.

28 A three member committee comprising Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya reported on 1 April 1949 that though the formation of linguistic provinces should be agreed to in principle it should be postponed so that more important matters received immediate attention. Though the committee warned against opening any inter provincial boundary disputes in north India it did not oppose consideration of the formation of Andhra Pradesh.

dealt with some time after the new Constitution comes into force. This of course, does not mean that the Cabinet did not realise the importance of this subject or the deep feeling behind it. But the Cabinet felt very strongly that during the critical period in which we live now, it would be a very serious risk for us to upset the growing equilibrium in the country by an attempt to change provincial boundaries and the like. They would not be discharging their responsibility if they did not express their opinion on this subject clearly. It is manifest that arguments about new provinces etc., give rise to strong passions. Anything that leads to this state of mind is deplorable and upsetting. We dare not encourage this trouble when we have to face major problems all over India and in the world.

26 Another matter stressed in the Cabinet was the necessity of considering certain frontier areas as well as the key places from the point of view of defence and economic welfare.

27 You are aware that Lord Boyd Orr, an eminent expert in food and agriculture, was invited by the Government of India to advise us on the food problem. He spent three weeks here and has given us his suggestions. The Food Ministry is considering them and we hope to come to some decision in regard to them fairly soon. They will no doubt be communicated to you. Lord Boyd Orr pointed out that many of our policies were excellent but the real snag lies in implementing them. Somehow or other they lost themselves at some places between the policy forming authority and the man in the field. Greater food production depends upon the man in the field and unless he is brought into the picture and made actively to cooperate, results will be limited. He gave the instance of England during war time where great success was obtained in food production because of cooperation all round and a determined drive. Lord Boyd Orr also pointed out that he felt that there was not enough cooperation and unity of outlook between the various provinces and the Centre in this most vital problem. I pass this on to you because this

cooperation depends so much on your and other provincial governments

28 There is one matter to which I should like to draw your attention. Ministers of one province sometimes visit another province or state. If this is entirely a private visit, then no fuss need be made about it. But if it is at all a public visit or for any kind of a public function, then official intimation should be sent to the government of the visiting province. It must be remembered that it is improper and undignified for a minister to criticise the activities of another provincial government in public.

29 In another two days time the Constituent Assembly is meeting for I hope the last stage in the journey to finalising the Constitution and thus laying the firm foundations for the Indian Republic of our dreams. India rose bigger and bigger before our eyes. May we as individuals or as groups keep pace with this growth and be worthy of it!

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
3 June 1949

My dear Premier

In foreign affairs the Big Four continue to discuss the future of Germany without coming to an agreement ¹ In spite of this lack of agreement there is little doubt that war tension has subsided in Europe In China the Chinese Communist armies advance southwards while the old Nationalist Government has practically broken up completely It is clear that there is no sufficient organised force in China which can stop the advance of the Communist armies They may be stopped or delayed by internal factors and by the great distances not by opposing armies They will thus in all probability continue to march southward and after some months occupy the whole of China At a rough estimate this process should be completed by the beginning of September

2 The question of Hong Kong² will then no doubt arise and this may give rise to a lot of trouble Undoubtedly Hong Kong is Chinese and must some time or other revert to China I suppose the U K Government must realise this although they have a perpetual lease of Hong Kong No Chinese Government Nationalist or Communist can agree to any foreign power holding on to Chinese territory

1 The Foreign Ministers meeting at Paris from 23 May to 20 June agreed to maintain the New York Agreement of 4 May

2 Hong Kong a British colony includes Hong Kong Islands Stonecutter's Islands the ceded territory of Kowloon and the New Territories While Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain in 1841 Kowloon peninsula was added in 1860 and in 1898 Britain obtained a 99 year lease of the New Territories

3 At the same time the U K Government is certainly not going to agree to walk out of Hong Kong under threat of armed attack. They may be prepared to discuss the future of the city. If they are attacked they will no doubt defend themselves and this may have far reaching consequences in the East. It is a little difficult to say now what might happen in Hong Kong as this will undoubtedly depend on other events which precede this. The next two or three months will determine in many ways the relationship of other nations to the new China. It is clear that the U K Government or indeed any other foreign government is anxious to avoid conflict in China. On the whole it would seem that the Chinese Communist Government will also avoid this conflict with any Western power. So the chances of such a conflict are very limited.

4 It must be remembered that at the present moment there is no Central Government in China. The old Nationalist Government obviously is not functioning as any kind of a central government or even a government for any considerable area. The Communists though possessing large areas of territory have not announced any Central Government. So long as this Central Government is not formed and announced even the question of recognition does not arise. Foreign Ambassadors in Nanking are at present in a very peculiar and somewhat embarrassing position. They are not accredited to the new Government and have no formal contacts with it. They live there therefore very much in the air and cannot do much. Indeed it is difficult for us to communicate with our Ambassador though we do get messages across occasionally through devious routes. It is possible that we may have to call him back in common with other powers for report and consultation. But our instructions to him are to stay on as long as he possibly can.

5 The behaviour of the French Government towards India has lately been very peculiar. You know that we have had a great deal of argument with them about the proposed

plebiscite³ in the French possessions and we have insisted all along that there must be neutral observers approved of by both parties for this plebiscite. They have not accepted our viewpoint yet and it would almost appear that they will act unilaterally. If that happens we do not propose to consider this plebiscite binding upon us in any way. Our information is that Pondicherry has never had proper elections there in the past. If care is not taken this plebiscite may well be farcical.

6 While this argument was going on another matter supervened. Our customs union lapsed and we put up a customs barrier. The French Government has been protesting vigorously against this although at the same time they have not agreed to continue the old treaty for the time being.⁴ Some days ago we were astonished to receive a demand from the French Government for the withdrawal of our Consul General⁵ from Pondicherry. This was a serious matter and our only response could be a demand for the withdrawal of the French Ambassador from Delhi. Before making this demand however we pointed out these grave consequences to the French Government and called upon them to withdraw their letter and their demand for the removal of the Consul General. The French Government agreed to this and the matter therefore ended for the time being.

7 Meanwhile it appears from press reports that the French Government have got the Vice Chairman of The Hague Court to appoint some observers to enquire into the customs barrier.

3 A plebiscite was held in Chandernagore on 19 June 1949. The plebiscite on other French possessions to be held on 11 December 1949 was however postponed.

4 With the lapse of the 1941 Customs Union Agreement on 31 March 1949 the Indian Government pending the renewal of agreement put up a customs barrier which the French Government termed as an economic blockade of her possessions.

5 M R A Bhaag (1905-1978) Sheriff of Bombay 1942 served in the Indian Foreign Service from 1946 to 1964.

complaints⁶ This again surprised us greatly as we had had no previous intimation of this and it is not clear where The Hague Court comes into the picture We do not propose to recognise any such unilateral action

8 I paid a brief visit to Kashmir last week I found conditions there somewhat better than previously That is to say the transport and civil supplies were better organised But there are still very great difficulties in many ways So far as the United Nations are concerned they have now received the replies both of India and Pakistan⁷ and are presumably considering what their next step should be We shall have to wait for this before determining any action of ours Meanwhile we hold on firmly to what we have got and try to help in improving the administration of Kashmir Also we give thought to any possible development in the Kashmir situation and prepare for it

9 I am thinking of paying a visit to Ladakh⁸ early next month on the occasion of the great Buddhist fair at the chief monastery⁹ of Ladakh a little beyond Leh This fair attracts Buddhists from roundabout areas Tibet and Central Asia also It is not particularly easy to reach there and my visit will mean my absence from Delhi for about a week But I think this will be worthwhile from many points of view From an entirely personal point of view I am looking forward to it greatly as a trek in the mountains at 12 000 feet altitude is an exhilarating experience

6 India protested on 3 June 1949 against France unilaterally referring the question of referendum to The Hague Court in violation of her agreement of 1948 under which the terms of referendum were to be mutually decided by the two countries

7 Rejecting the U N Commission's truce proposals on 30 May Pakistan asserted that stationing of the Indian troops in the northern areas was not warranted by the circumstances and if at all there were to be Indian outposts the state government should not extend its authority in those areas

8 Nehru visited Ladakh from 4 to 8 July 1949

9 Hemis Gonpa monastery

10 There has been some misapprehension about Hyderabad. An item of news appeared recently that eight Communists had been sentenced to death¹⁰. This, as stated, was entirely wrong. There is no question of Communists as such being sentenced to death. There have been hundreds of murders in the two eastern districts of Hyderabad, where Communists have been functioning. Hundreds of state Congressmen have been killed individually. There has been a great deal of loot and arson also. Certain cases were therefore started on charges of murder and eight persons were convicted of murder. An appeal lies in the High Court and subsequently the Governor is entitled to review the sentences. So this is purely a criminal matter tried by normal processes of law.

11 Otherwise the situation in Hyderabad though slowly improving still offers a great many difficult problems. It is manifest that the present temporary government cannot go on indefinitely and has to give place to a popular government.¹¹ Before this change over takes place we would like certain prerequisites of a strong popular government to be established.

12 In the little state of Sikkim which is not on the same level as the Indian states¹² there has been trouble between the Maharaja¹³ and his people with the result that there is hardly

10 The special tribunal at Hyderabad awarded death sentences to eight men convicted of murder on 20 May 1949.

11 On 1 December 1949 the military administration was replaced by a civil administration with M. K. Vellodi acting as Chief Minister. In early 1950 four members of the Hyderabad State Congress were appointed as Ministers and following the general elections in March 1952 a Congress Ministry was installed.

12 Sikkim had signed a Standstill Agreement with India on 27 February 1948 whereby all agreements and administrative arrangements on matters of common concern existing between the Crown and Sikkim as on 15 August 1947 were to continue between them. The Sikkim Darbar and the Sikkim National Party had opposed the State's merger with India.

13 Tashi Namgyal (1891-1963) Maharaja of Sikkim 1914-63.

any effective administration functioning there. Under pressure the Maharaja agreed to appoint a Ministry¹⁴ But this Ministry is totally inadequate to meet the situation and trouble is feared¹⁵ At the request of the authorities in Sikkim we are thinking of appointing an administrator there. Meanwhile, we have taken the precaution to send a company of troops there from Darjeeling. The future of Sikkim is tied up completely with India and we can accept no other basis for it. The best course for Sikkim would be to accede to India as other states have done. But unwisely the people there hesitate to accede. The only other course for them we have pointed out is to have a treaty with India which is tantamount to accession on the three subjects. We are considering this treaty¹⁶

13 There is at present a great deal of agitation going on in various parts of India by various groups against the governments and the Congress. Unfortunately in most parts of India there is not sufficient work being done on the part of Congressmen. Government as such cannot function in the way the Congress should function. It has become urgently necessary therefore that we should deal with the problems that arise and the criticism that is made in a positive way. No major difficulty is solved by mere repression though that becomes inevitable when a challenge to the security of the State is made. We have to consider economic programmes and the removal as far as possible of the difficulties that face the people. Unfortunately

14 The State Congress had been demanding installation of a popular ministry in Sikkim but their negotiations with the Darbar in April 1949 had failed. On 1 May 1949 the palace was besieged by a group of agitators demanding popular rule in the state. The Maharaja who had escaped attack with the help of the Indian army had to agree to the formation of a ministry headed by Tashi Tschering.

15 On 2 June 1949 Indian troops were rushed to Gangtok following the collapse of the state administration. On 6 June the Maharaja requested India's Political Officer to take over the administration till normal conditions were restored.

16 As per the treaty signed in December 1950 India assumed responsibility for the external affairs, defence and communications of Sikkim.

this cannot be done suddenly. But even apart from this it is necessary to develop a personal and human touch with our people in the villages especially which Congressmen used to do so effectively in the past. Our people should go about the villages and other places explaining the situation and pointing out our difficulties. This personal touch, if carried on in a friendly and human way goes far. We seem to have lost that touch and very few people go about as they used to in the old days. The result is that the public comes into contact only with the critics and opponents of government and sees Congress only as a governmental machinery. It is urgently necessary that this aspect of the problem before us should be considered both by our Ministers and our colleagues in the Congress.

14 The government can do much but there are limits beyond which a government cannot go and only a non official agency can succeed. Even in labour matters the government can of course do a great deal. But any interference with the independence of trade unions is resented. It is against all the traditions of the labour movement. There should be friendship and cooperation between the trade union movement and government as at present in the U.K. But if it appears that the trade unions have lost their independence, then their influence lessens and they cannot even give that help to a policy of government which they otherwise might do.

15 Regarding the Communists I have frequently pointed out to you that the problem before us is not one of fighting any economic doctrine or ideological approach whether we agree with it or not. What we are up against today is an open, deliberate aggressive and violent challenge to the very basis of Government. It is a kind of revolt which includes in its scope many kinds of violence murder loot and sabotage. It is this that we have to combat and not any theory or ideology. This fact should be emphasized because otherwise people in India or in foreign countries imagine that we are suppressing merely differences of opinion. As a matter of fact, anyone who reads

periodicals opposed to Government will realise to what extreme lengths virulent and even false criticism is permitted to exist. I do not mind criticism, however strong. But I do object to falsehood and I object even more to vulgarity. I must confess to a feeling of depression when I see how some of our newspapers and periodicals stoop to this falsehood and vulgarity, thus bringing down the whole standard of our press. Of course, this does not apply to many newspapers and periodicals.

16 We are sending a new Ambassador to Nepal in the course of the next few days.¹⁷ The situation in Nepal is an uneasy one and it is possible that there might be developments there in the course of the next few months.¹⁸ I am not referring to the much advertised campaigns of some organisations outside Nepal in India¹⁹ but rather to internal conditions in Nepal. As a Government we must treat Nepal as a friendly country, although we are anxious that there should be domestic reforms there. The country is backward and if it does not change soon enough it is bound to face trouble. We have impressed this on the authorities there. The position is peculiar, as you no doubt know. The real authority there is the Prime Minister²⁰ and the Prime Ministership runs in a particular family by a special

17 C P N Singh (b. 1901) Vice Chancellor Patna University 1945 Ambassador to Nepal 1949-52 Governor of Punjab 1953-58 Ambassador to Japan 1959 Governor of Uttar Pradesh 1980-85

18 As agitation for constitutional reforms in Nepal became intense the rule of the Ranas was ended in November 1950. Under the Delhi Agreement of March 1951 a Council of Ministers collectively responsible to the King was to run the government.

19 As all political activities were banned in Nepal the Nepali National Congress was founded by B P Koirala in Calcutta in 1947. In August 1948 the Nepali Democratic Congress was founded by a faction of the ruling family of Ranas operating from Calcutta. Later both parties merged to form a common front to fight for constitutional reforms.

20 Mohan Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana, Commander in Chief Nepalese Army and head of Home and several other departments 1945-48 Prime Minister and Supreme Commander in Chief 1948-50 Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs 1951

order of succession²¹ The King²² is virtually powerless It is unfortunate that certain adventurist tactics should be adopted by some people in regard to Nepal They do no good and often do harm Our policy is that we permit normal constitutional agitation in India in regard to reforms or changes in Nepal But we cannot permit any attempt at violence or preparations for violence

17 In the United Nations Assembly the Indian vote was decisive as regards the future of Italian colonies²³ The vote on the Indo South African question was not completely as we wished²⁴ But on the whole, we have reason for some satisfaction The resolution passed was practically unanimous The Hyderabad matter was brought up by Pakistan before the Security Council²⁵ It was talked out but not before the Foreign Minister of Pakistan²⁶ had made the kind of objectionable

21 The Royal decree of 1856 relegated the King of Nepal to an honorary position while effective authority was concentrated till 1951 in the hands of the nobility dominated by the Rana family Although intra familial arrangements on such questions as the succession and the distribution of responsibilities were made there was no development of any viable political institution

22 Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah (1906-1955) King of Nepal 1911-50 and 1952-55

23 The question of Italy's North African colonies was to be referred to the United Nations if the Allied Powers failed to reach any settlement among themselves by September 1948 As per the Bevin-Sforza Plan drawn up by the British and Italian foreign ministers a Libyan State was to come into existence at the end of ten years and in the interim period its existing three parts were to remain under British and Italian tutelage Through India's efforts in the U.N. General Assembly the resolution approving this arrangement which was tantamount to continuance of colonial administration in Libya was defeated

24 See *ante* p. 345

25 It was discussed on 19 and 25 May despite India's objection that Hyderabad being a part of India the question should not be discussed in the Security Council

26 Muhammad Zafrullah Khan (1893-1985) Barrister at Lahore 1916-35 President All India Muslim League 1931 member Viceroy's Council 1935-41 Judge of the Federal Court 1941-47 Foreign Minister of Pakistan 1947-54 Judge of The Hague Court 1954-61 and 1964-73 and its President 1970-73

speech for which he is becoming rather well known²⁷ In this matter the attitude of the Egyptian representative distressed us and we have drawn the attention of the Egyptian Government to it

18 Israel has now become a full member of the United Nations²⁸ and is recognised by a very large number of countries India voted against this not because of any ill feeling against the Jews but in continuation of the policy she has consistently pursued in the past The position now is that Israel has obviously come to stay and is a member of the United Nations We shall have to consider our future policy in regard to it carefully

19 The All India Congress Committee, as you know, met at Dehra Dun and approved by a very large majority, of the decision that the Indian Republic should continue its free association with the Commonwealth

20 The Constituent Assembly is meeting from day to day and has made fairly rapid progress with its Constitution making One very important decision, having a certain historic significance, is the abolition of all reservations except in the case of Scheduled Castes I am happy that this decision was made and that we had the courage to make it and thus get out of the vicious circle in which we have been for the last several decades Several important and rather controversial matters have been postponed for the time being and will be taken up after the rest of the Constitution has been disposed of I hope that we shall finish our Constitution making by the end of July Newspapers have given publicity to the idea that the Indian Republic will come into existence on the 15th August That is

27 Speaking on 19 and 25 May Zafrullah Khan criticized the Indian action in Hyderabad and alleged that the minorities there were being persecuted He urged the United Nations to take suitable action to restore the status quo in Hyderabad

28 Became a member on 14 May 1949

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26 Muhammad Zafrullah Khan (1893 1985) Barrister at Lahore 1916 35 President All India Muslim League 1931 member Viceroy's Council 1935 41 Judge of the Federal Court 1941 47 Foreign Minister of Pakistan 1947 54 Judge of The Hague Court 1954 61 and 1964 73 and its President 1970 73

expect each province to do likewise with a Director having sufficient powers in charge. It is important of course to have the right policy but the problem before us is not so much of policy as of implementing it and having a uniform approach to the problem all over India. Somehow policies and directions do not reach the man in the field who should count most of all in this campaign. The Bombay Government have made their District Magistrate responsible for the Grow More Food Campaign in his district. That is a good idea. But we really have to build up a chain from the Central and provincial governments right down to the agriculturists and the farmers. It is absolutely essential for the fullest cooperation between provinces and the Centre.

24 Apart from major policies I feel that there is not sufficient realisation yet among our middle class people like people like us as to the gravity of the problem and the necessity for austerity. The Congress made an appeal for austerity some time back. This is desirable from the national point of view to preserve our resources. It is also necessitated from the psychological point of view. It is vulgar and wholly unbecoming for food to be wasted in feasts and the like when there is lack of it in the country. I suggest that regulations to this end should be made and an effective campaign be waged to instruct public opinion. It should be considered extreme bad form for food to be wasted or for big feasts to be given.

25 Each family wherever it is possible should try to grow some food in its back garden if necessary. Vegetables can always be grown there. As a matter of fact even wheat can be grown. A friend of mine here in Delhi has grown a fairly large quantity of very good wheat in her house garden. I have already written to you about sweet potatoes, tapioca, bananas etc. The point is that each individual and family should in his or her individual capacity help in growing food and in becoming self sufficient as far as possible. We have a habit of advising others and not thinking of our own duty.

not feasible. If we finish Constitution making by the end of July, we shall require at least two or three months to revise the Constitution from the point of view of legal wording, phrasing and proper drafting and arrangement. This is likely to take at least two months or more. Thus in no event, can the Republic come into existence before October or even later. Of course, the full implementation of the Constitution can only take place after elections have been held, but it is certainly proposed to declare the Republic long before that.

21 Discussions are going to take place in regard to the sterling balances in London this month. Some of our experts are going there soon for this purpose and the Finance Minister himself will follow them later in the month. Our Health Minister Rajkumari Amrit Kaur²⁹ is also proceeding to Rome to attend the World Health Conference.

22 Our Ministry of Rehabilitation is addressing you in regard to legislation for evacuee property. This is an important matter and it is desirable to have a certain uniformity in India in regard to it. I hope therefore that your government will pay special attention to it and help us in getting this uniformity. The idea is that provinces should follow the model set by the Central Government for the centrally administered areas.³⁰

23 I have to remind you again of the food position. I do not wish to draw invidious comparisons but I should like to say that the Bombay province has done fine work in this connection, both in regard to procurement and otherwise. We have been considering Lord Boyd Orr's report and have come to certain conclusions about setting up special emergency boards to deal with this situation. We shall put up such a board here, and we

²⁹ (1889-1964) Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi for sixteen years, Union Minister of Health 1947-52, member Rajya Sabha 1957-64.

³⁰ By this ordinance the persons who had been allotted evacuee property in Pakistan were denied the right to claim the property left behind by them. The property of such persons was declared as evacuee property.

guilty of this but the facts are not by any means clear I mention this to you because of the embarrassing position that has been created for a large number of Indians in Malaya I might add that we have encouraged and authorised an appeal on Sambasivam's behalf to the Privy Council in London Whether this succeeds or not I do not know It is unlikely to succeed But we wanted to do our utmost in the matter

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

26 The Bombay Government has given prizes to villages for procurement. That is a good idea. Similarly prizes might be given for production also. It is unfortunate and most regrettable that some people go about preaching against procurement. Any intelligent person can see that this is an anti-national activity. This can only be met by widespread official and non official propaganda explaining the position and calling for the help of the public.

27 As you know there has been a good deal of feeling in India about Ganapati's execution³¹ in Malaya and Sambasivam's case³² which has not yet been finally decided. We have protested to the U.K. Government, the Malayan Government and to all concerned and have indeed done our best in the matter. We do feel that Ganapati's execution should not have taken place. Nevertheless there is another aspect of this case that I should like to place before you as it has been placed before us by many Indians in Malaya. They have been somewhat agitated by Indian reactions in this matter because it is affecting their position in Malaya. Malaysians and Chinese say that there is no reason why Indians should be treated differently from them. Do they claim some kind of extra territoriality? If a law or emergency legislation applies to Malaysians and Chinese there why should Indians be excluded? If the law is bad the agitation should be against the law and not against a particular application of it which indicates differential treatment. We are told that the normal judicial processes were gone through. Sambasivam's case is a little more difficult than Ganapati's as he was actually present at a fight during which some people were killed. He may not have been

31 S R Ganapati (1925-1949) President of Pan Malayan Federation of Trade Union for some time, arrested on 15 March 1949 under the Emergency regulations and executed on charges of sedition and collection of armed weapons.

32 Trade Union leader of Malaya, arrested under the Emergency regulations and sentenced to death.

fortunate as not to be affected by these currents or to be able to afford to ignore them

We discuss communism and have to take steps against the violent and subversive activities of the Communist Party in India. That is natural and inevitable. Yet the real problem is something bigger than communism—it is what lies behind communism. It is an economic distemper coming at a time when expectations have been roused and some kind of political consciousness has come into existence among vast masses of the people.

The Chinese revolution, as I have previously pointed out to you, is one of the biggest changes and upheavals in history and it is going to have very far reaching consequences. Those consequences cannot simply be judged in terms of communism. This Chinese revolution has been said to be a continuation of the revolution that started in China in 1911 when the Manchu dynasty was thrown out. Since then, for these long years, China has been in great travail and her millions have suffered terribly and essentially all these ups and downs of thirty eight years have been parts of a major agrarian revolution. No one can say what the future of China will be. The country will still take a fairly considerable time to settle down in any form. Standards are very low there and communism by itself does not raise standards, though a better organisation of the agrarian system does relieve the burden on the peasantry to some extent. Ultimately standards can only be raised by greater production as well as proper distribution.

Competent observers well acquainted with the Chinese scene say that the leaders of the Chinese Communists are certainly 100 per cent Marxists, but their interpretation of Marxism is not always in line with the present Russian interpretation. Apart from this it is always made to fit in realistically with conditions in China. I think it may be said with truth that in spite of the sympathy that the Soviet Russia has for Communist China, the former has not viewed with favour many developments in China. Only four years ago Soviet Russia, in a sense, disowned the Communists of China by

New Delhi
4 June, 1949

My dear Premier.*

I received a few days ago a letter from Dr Stanley Jones¹ He is an American missionary who has travelled a great deal in the world and has spent a considerable time in India He has recently returned from China² and has been powerfully impressed with what he saw there I think you will be interested in what he writes It may be that his views are not wholly applicable to the Indian situation Nevertheless it is desirable for us to consider the views of a competent and friendly observer There is a risk for us to be complacent and to forget sometimes the wood for the trees We get tied up in our petty problems forgetting that the major problem of the day remains unsolved and might well overwhelm us if ignored

It has seemed to me extraordinary how nearly all of us to whatever group we might belong do not show a sufficient awareness of the swift currents that are convulsing Asia at present We are fortunate in many ways but we are not so

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 Eli Stanley Jones (1884-1973) American missionary who came to India in 1907 and set up in 1930 the Sat Tal Ashram in district Naini Tal U P

2 Jones wrote on 15 May 1949 that the Chinese Communists had succeeded because they had completed the revolution which the Kuomintang had failed to do Besides the communist revolution had remained basically Chinese in character though it was deeply influenced by Russia it was not dictated to by Moscow He thought that the Congress in India would have to initiate radical reforms both within the party and the country if it desired to fight the communist danger

making a treaty with the Nationalist Government.³ It is also, on the whole, true that the Soviet Russia has not helped with any supplies Communist armies of China. Their supplies had largely come from Japanese dumps left after the war and from capture of American material given to the Nationalist armies.

The Chinese Communist armies, therefore, have gained their success not with Soviet aid but relying largely upon themselves. Therefore they are not dependent on the Soviets, as many Communist parties and groups in Europe have been. They have shown this independence on various occasions. Their leaders are undoubtedly able men and they have 25 years hard experience behind them. Neutral and even hostile observers have stated that their solution of the land problem is for the moment effective and has given satisfaction to the peasantry. Also that their administration has compared very favourably both from the point of view of efficiency and integrity with the administration of the Nationalist Government in China. All this leads to the conclusion that the agrarian problem is first in priority in large parts of Asia, including India. Because of many of our agrarian reforms in India the position here is more stable and the Government and the Congress have the backing of a large part of the peasantry. Without that the Government could not carry on. But we have far from solved this agrarian problem and the pledges we gave for the liquidation of the zamindari system yet remain to be fulfilled.

I have indicated a few aspects of this problem. But the main thing is that we must look at this basic problem and not lose ourselves in a maze of detail or of petty reforms which do not touch the main problem and sometimes create additional burdens for us. Obviously if we fail on the main issue, all our smaller efforts and reforms will be swept away.

³ By the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed on 14 August 1945 the Soviets were allowed the use of port facilities at Dairen and railroad rights in Manchuria and could set up a joint Sino Soviet naval base at Port Arthur. The Soviets in return assured "moral and military assistance to the Nationalist Government in China against the Japanese invasion and non interference in the internal affairs of China."

Most Congressmen seem to be unaware of these grave developments in Asia or if they are aware they do not attach sufficient importance to them in relation to India. Socialists carry on petty agitations and satyagraha and are equally unaware of this fundamental position. Most people think in terms of the elections to come. But much may happen before these elections. I ventured to say at a press interview some time ago that the Socialists were completely static in their outlook. I think this is perfectly true in spite of their revolutionary slogans. I would add that Congressmen are also often equally static. In a rapidly changing world nothing is more dangerous than the static state of mind and complacency. We who are burdened with governmental responsibility face a multitude of problems from day to day and do our best to solve them. We hardly have time to think of basic issues. Sometimes we get excited about matters of importance no doubt but which are not only irrelevant but full of danger in the present context of things. Thus separatist tendencies and provincialism, linguistic provinces, even the question of language or petty reforms to make people more moral by law or compulsion absorb our minds. We seem to think that our fight for freedom is over and we can now have the luxury of having fierce arguments about other matters. In any real sense of the word this fight for freedom is not over though we may be politically free. It is not over in the economic sense and even politically we have to be continually vigilant. That vigilance is not only necessary because of the curious state of affairs that exists in Pakistan and in the minds of Pakistan's leaders but even more so because of the other basic factors to which I have referred above. Our contacts with the masses diminish. We take them for granted and that is always a perilous thing to do. We rely on our past prestige and achievements. There is something in that and we have indeed carried on because of that. But past capital cannot last for ever and living on capital without earning anything is apt to lead to bankruptcy.

Even in regard to the food position as I have written to you in my fortnightly letter there is not an acute awareness of the

problem or of our duty. I have often criticised the habits some of us are getting into of continually running down ourselves, our administration and our people. I think all this is exaggerated though undoubtedly all these evils exist and have to be fought. But the real evil is not just corruption and nepotism but a general weakening of the moral fibre. This shows itself in so many ways. The great urge that carried us forward during the past quarter of a century based on a sense of duty and willingness to sacrifice for a cause is not visible except in odd individuals.

I have ventured to write to you in this vein because I am anxious that you and your colleagues and through you others might give earnest thought to all these matters. I have supreme faith in India, a faith which transcends even an accumulation of faults and futilities on our part. Nevertheless India will only go ahead by our earnest and concentrated efforts and our acting as men and women of vision who are not pushed hither and thither by petty conflicts or passions of the moment. Fascism arises and grows when we lose this vision and think in petty terms. Communalism and the R S S movement are products of this and exhibit an amazing narrowness in outlook even from the opportunist point of view. Communism certainly attracts idealists as well as opportunists. But the way it functions is devoid completely of any moral standard or even any thought for India's good. It thinks in other terms. Yet because there is an element of idealism in it it draws earnest young men and women. Those who are impelled by a faith in a cause can seldom be crushed by superior force. They can only be defeated by higher idealism as well as vision and a capacity to work for the cause that represents these objectives.

I have written at greater length than I intended. This was intended to be merely a brief forwarding letter. But the thoughts and ideas in my mind have run away with me. You will forgive me for this.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
15 June 1949

My dear Premier

Nothing of particular note has happened in international affairs during the past fortnight. The conversations between the four Foreign Ministers are going on in Paris without achieving any substantial result. Nevertheless it may be said that the tension in Europe is far less than it has been during the past year. There is a feeling of satisfaction in American and British chancelleries at the fact that their airlift to Berlin and other measures have exercised enough pressure on the Soviets to make her climb down to some extent. There is little doubt that these measures did inconvenience the Soviet part of Berlin considerably and as realists the Soviet Government decided to change its policy slightly. To consider this as a major victory in the political field for the United States and the United Kingdom and Allied Powers is an exaggeration. In any event it has led to a relaxation of the tension in Europe.

2 This does not mean that the inner tensions and peoples fears and apprehensions do not continue. It does mean that war has receded into the distance. In Russia and in other Communist countries of Eastern Europe allied to Russia the signing of the Atlantic Pact and the formation of the Western Union came as a shock. There is little doubt that most people there believe this to be a precursor to war or, at any rate, a definite preparation for aggressive action against the Soviets. The talk of bases in the Pacific and Atlantic also leads the Russians to come to the same conclusion. They are convinced that the Western powers are preparing for war.

3 The Western powers, on the other hand, are frightened of the success of the Soviet policy in Eastern Europe and of the spread of communism in South-East Asia. They are perhaps more afraid of this creeping process and infiltration than of actual war. At the back of their minds there is also the fear that the Soviet Union will be stronger for a war after a few years. It will be stronger both economically and perhaps from the point of view of the development of the atom bomb there.¹

4 Thus there is this mutual fear and suspicion which leads to attempts on both sides to strengthen themselves for a possible war and to manoeuvre for position. This state of affairs plus fear results in a dangerous position. Nevertheless, it may be said with some confidence that there will be no major war for a number of years.

5 As a matter of fact attention has very largely shifted from Europe to South East Asia and more particularly, to China. No new developments have taken place there. The old Kuomintang Government which went to Canton, is still partly there and has partly shifted over to Chungking and Formosa. From all reliable accounts, it has no effective military force behind it. But distances are great in China and it may take some months before the Communist armies, aided by local uprisings, reach the south. As soon as they do that, the question of Hong Kong will become important. Hong Kong is an old colony of the United Kingdom which was leased for a lengthy period and which has absorbed a vast quantity of British capital. The U.K. Government has no intention of handing over Hong Kong to the new Government in China under threat of military aggression. They have, therefore, taken steps to increase their defence forces in Hong Kong. I think that the U.K. Government wishes to avoid, as far as possible, any

1 On 6 November 1947 V. M. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Minister, declared that this secret (i.e. about the atom bomb) has long ceased to exist. It was announced by the Soviets on 25 September 1949 that they had successfully tested an atomic explosion.

conflict in Hong Kong. Possibly they realise that some time or other Hong Kong will have to join the rest of China. But their interests there are too great for them to surrender them at the bidding of the new Chinese authorities. I do not think myself that any conflict is likely over Hong Kong at this stage. Both parties will try to avoid it although there might be some aggressive talk.

6 The situation in Nanking vis a vis foreign missions is peculiar. The new Communist Government ignores them and at the same time does not interfere with them except that they are not allowed to communicate in cypher or through diplomatic bags. It also appears that the diplomatic staff cannot get exit permits. These foreign missions are thus not recognised by the new Government and are not given any diplomatic privileges. This new Government does not even ask for their recognition. Although this Government is functioning no Central Government for China has yet been proclaimed and so the question of recognition does not really arise.

7 Most of the foreign ambassadors are thus more or less marooned in Nanking. They are experiencing considerable difficulties because of the fall of the communist currency and consequent inflation. On the whole the U.K. Government is looking forward to according recognition to the new Chinese Government but they want some step to be taken by the Chinese first.² The U.S.A. Government is a little more reluctant to go in this direction. Apparently the Chinese Communist Government is in no hurry either to recognise or to be recognised by any one. They want other powers to cease to recognise the Kuomintang Government before they deal with them.

8 In Burma there has been no great change and yet the situation is somewhat better from the point of view of the

² This was disclosed by Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Minister, on 9 June while addressing the annual conference of the Labour Party at Blackpool.

Burmese Government Thakin Nu the Prime Minister has recently stated that his Government has turned the corner ³ He speaks with some assurance

9 In Indonesia interminable internal discussions continue and no one knows when they will end. It is announced that the Republicans will take possession of Jogjakarta soon⁴ but the Dutch Government attaches some conditions which the Republicans do not accept As is their usual practice the Dutch Government continue to raise difficulties and obstruct progress The U K and U S A Governments address occasional homilies to the Netherlands and for the rest remain quiescent or seek to make the Indonesians agree to the Dutch terms On the whole the Indonesians are pessimistic about the future outcome of these negotiations

10 The announcement that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is going to visit Moscow soon came as a surprise to many people and all kinds of rumours and speculations were let loose ⁵ I have no special knowledge of what has happened But from past experience I can hazard the guess that no great importance need be attached to this visit It is interesting to remember that the Pakistan Government and their principal Ministers have been condemning communism and Soviet policy for a long time They have held themselves up as bulwarks against the spread of communism in Asia On this ground they sought the goodwill of the U K and even more so the U S A It is a little odd therefore that they should now start flirting with the Soviets Possibly this is meant chiefly to exercise pressure on the Western powers just to show them that Pakistan can look

3 Thakin Nu stated in Parliament on 14 June that there is no likelihood of the country's return to the bleak days of February March and April when all of us were kept in a terrible state of suspense He thanked Britain India Pakistan and Sri Lanka for extending help in our hour of need

4 By 29 June the Dutch evacuated Jogjakarta and the Republicans re-established their government there

5 The visit however did not take place

elsewhere if it is not helped in every way. This business of offering oneself to the highest bidder seldom pays and the normal result is disillusionment from every side. Meanwhile Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan have deteriorated still further and there is great tension between the two countries.⁶

11 In regard to the French possessions in India the French Government has toned down somewhat and accepted our original proposal that observers for the plebiscite should be approved of by us. The two gentlemen who rushed up to India at the bidding of the Vice Chairman⁷ of The Hague Court have been put in a rather false position. We sent an officer to Pondicherry to enquire into the customs cordon there. As a result of his recommendations certain changes and relaxations have been accepted.

12 The plebiscite in Chandernagore is due to take place within the next few days. The Pondicherry one has provisionally been fixed for December next.

13 Regarding Kashmir the U N Commission have announced⁸ that both India and Pakistan have been unable to accept their proposals unreservedly. We have not been told what the Pakistan reply is.⁹ But evidently it is not one of acceptance. Members of the U N Commission have again come to Delhi to confer with us and ask for some elucidation. We are always glad to help them in this way but our basic position remains unchanged and we do not propose to weaken it in any way.

6 Afghanistan had protested against the air bombing on 12 June by Pakistan of Mogholai a place within its frontiers. It also alleged that Pakistan had assisted Agha Amin Jan stepbrother of King Amanullah in a bid to overthrow the Afghan Government. Denying these allegations Pakistan charged that Afghanistan had been trying to proclaim the Fakir of Ipi as the king of Pathanistan.

7 Jose Gustavo Guerrato of El Salvador.

8 On 6 June 1949.

9 See ante p. 357.

14 A relatively small development in Sikkim on the North East frontier of India has attracted world attention. This little state (which is different in status from the other Indian states), has a population of only about a lakh and a half. There was a continuing conflict between the Maharaja and the state Congress. As there was fear of bloodshed, we intervened, and at the request of the Maharaja, our Political Officer¹⁰ took over charge. It is proposed to send a Dewan¹¹ or Administrator there to function till such time as new arrangements are made. The leader of the state Congress¹² has welcomed our intervention. Thus both the parties to the dispute have expressed their appreciation of the action we have taken. Nevertheless, our critics abroad have called this another imperialist venture on the part of India. As a matter of fact, Sikkim is too small a proposition for any such venture and our only desire is that it should have a stable popular government. We should like Sikkim to accede to India, but that is entirely for the people of Sikkim to decide. In any event, whether they accede or not, the three subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications have to be dealt with by India. A small state like Sikkim can have no defence arrangements or foreign affairs. As for communications, they are non-existent. The importance of Sikkim to us lies in the fact that it is a frontier territory and we cannot afford to take risks with our frontier. I might mention that we gave a subsidy to Sikkim and have been giving this for many years past. If this subsidy was stopped, the economic structure of Sikkim would collapse. I hope that the Maharaja or the Maharajkumar of Sikkim as well as the leaders of the state Congress will visit Delhi soon for consultations with us.

10 Harshwar Dayal (1915-1964) Joined I.C.S. 1937 in foreign service from 1944. Political Officer in Sikkim 1948-52 and later Ambassador to Nepal.

11 John S. Lal (b. 1914) Joined I.C.S. 1938. Dewan of Sikkim 1949-54.

12 Tasha Ischerung.

15 I had occasion to meet Major General Chaudhuri,¹³ the Governor of Hyderabad, yesterday, and discuss the situation there with him. Hyderabad offers peculiar and difficult problems political, economic, cultural, and linguistic. It may take a considerable time before these problems are solved. Even in other areas, like the states of Rajasthan, we have to face many of these problems which have arisen, rather suddenly, as a result of the changes that have taken place. In many of these states of Rajasthan or Hyderabad the agrarian system was feudal with jagirdars who possessed administrative and judicial powers. It is not surprising therefore, that the problems of Hyderabad should take some time for us to solve them. I think, however, that our record in Hyderabad is definitely a good one and the mass of the population there, Hindu or Muslim, appreciates it. Apart from establishing law and order and peaceful conditions there, we have tackled agrarian problems: we have taken over the vast estates of the Nizam, called the *Sarf-i-khas*, and steps have been taken about the Jagirs. A committee is considering the whole agrarian system,¹⁴ and we hope that within the next few months further steps would be taken to reform this. These changes and the further measures taken have met with the approval of a great majority of the people there.

16 We have been aiming at the establishment of a popular administration in Hyderabad. But circumstances have compelled us to continue the present arrangements. It should be noted however that the present government of Hyderabad is not a military government, it is a civil government although the Governor is a military officer. Electoral rolls are being prepared and it is hoped that we might have elections there on

the basis of adult franchise round about November next. These elections will be for a Constituent Assembly which will determine the future constitution of Hyderabad.

17 Recently eight persons were condemned to death by a Tribunal in Hyderabad and considerable agitation took place and protests came to me from various parts of the world probably the communist world. As a matter of fact these were ordinary murder cases under the Criminal Law. They were treated as ordinary cases and death sentences were passed. They have no political significance. The cases are under appeal.

18 As is well known Communist elements in Hyderabad state created a reign of terror in some of the eastern districts. The old Razakar Government gave them a free hand for reasons of its own. Ever since the police action this area has been gradually cleared up and there is the normal functioning of the state apparatus collection of revenues etc. there. A small area chiefly forest remains where murders etc. still occur. Some of these murders are probably due to odd groups of people who call themselves Communists. Others are due just to private vengeance. When a system of law and order breaks down many people want to profit by it. Even so the number of murders is far less than it was and compares favourably with some districts in the Madras Presidency.

19 Generally speaking therefore the situation in Hyderabad though far from satisfactory is an improving one and a good deal of progress in various directions has been made. Perhaps the most important step taken to ease the situation and produce confidence is in relation to the agrarian system.

20 In regard to the states another important development is the decision to have a union between Travancore and Cochin.¹⁵

15 The covenant was signed on 28 May 1949.

This will be inaugurated on the 1st July, 1949

21 An event of local importance but of a much wider significance has been the recent election in South Calcutta where Shri Sarat Chandra Bose was elected by a very big majority over the Congress candidate ¹⁶ It is easy to find reasons for this, such as the fact that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose's family has been connected with that ward for a long time and that he bears an honoured name also that recent happenings in Calcutta have greatly irritated large numbers of people. Nevertheless, it would be exceedingly foolish to underrate the significance of this election. It is interesting to note that those opposed to the Congress consisted of diverse elements. There was Shri Sarat Chandra Bose's own relatively small group of revolutionary socialists as they call themselves there were the Communists who were more in evidence than any other group, there were the Hindu communalists with their slogan of 'Down with the Hindu Code' ¹⁷ there were some odd elements of the old I N A and there were I think some Socialists. We have here in this motley group everyone from fascism to communism and from extreme secularism to bigoted religion all joining hands to defeat the Congress candidate and succeeding. The recent firing in Calcutta on a violent crowd had resulted in the death of four women (As a matter of fact, some of these women died as a result of acid bombs being thrown by some demonstrators). This had created a powerful impression against the provincial government and was fully utilised by opponents of the Congress. Women in Calcutta, and there were thousands of women voters were especially exercised over this matter.

16 In the election held on 12 June 1949 Sarat Chandra Bose of the Socialist Republican Party had polled 19 030 votes against 5 780 votes polled by Suresh Chandra Das the Congress candidate.

17 The Hindu Code Bill aimed at the reform of the Hindu personal law relating to property marriage inheritance divorce guardianship and adoption. The codified Bill could not be passed till 1955 because it was strongly opposed both in Parliament and outside.

22 All these reasons may or may not be adequate but the basic fact remains that the provincial government of West Bengal and the Congress organisation in Calcutta had both completely lost grip of the situation. Indeed so far as the Congress in Calcutta is concerned it is thinking much more of party faction and party intrigue than of the election. Two days after the election a Congress Party meeting was held and this appeared to these Congressmen of greater importance than the election.¹⁸ If the Congress organisation functions in this way then it is quite inevitable that it should lose hold of the people as it has done in Calcutta.

23 Calcutta may be and I think is an extreme case. But to a somewhat lesser degree these forces have some influence all over India. It is up to us therefore to understand its importance and to realise that our good intentions are not enough or the hard work that we put in if we lose touch with mass opinion. It is the goodwill of the masses that has given strength and victory to the Congress. If that goodwill is withdrawn then the Congress and those who represent it also fade away. I am afraid that we who are engrossed in arduous tasks of administration are apt to forget this side of the picture. We grow smug and self complacent in the firm belief that we are doing good to our people and making them better in every way. That belief of ours is not sufficient if it is not felt also by the people concerned. We have tended rather to isolate ourselves and sometimes to be a little soft to the wrong done on our side. It is time therefore that we gave our earnest thought to this creeping paralysis that is setting in.

24 Congressmen appear to be more interested in the linguistic division of provinces or in a contest for power in the provincial Ministries than in the major problems of the day which in the ultimate analysis are economic. Labour has

¹⁸ Elections for the office bearers of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee were held on 14 June after 107 members had in a representation charged the existing executive of indulging in acts of corruption.

sometimes been troublesome but on the whole it has behaved well. It is true however that it is rather sullen and far from satisfactory. Capital and those who hold the capital continue also to be sullen in spite of the attempts made by our governments to give them fair play and opportunities of growth. They have failed to deliver the goods. All these problems have to be seen by us together in relation to one another because we cannot afford to ignore or bypass them.

25 As a matter of fact it can easily be shown that we are making progress in a variety of directions: vast schemes are afoot which will bring relief to our people and increase our food and other essentials of life. Some months ago the Bihar Legislature passed a Zamindari Abolition Bill. Unfortunately this was held up because of certain legal difficulties about compensation.¹⁹ A few days ago the United Provinces Government published their new Zamindari Abolition Bill²⁰ which the Premier of the United Provinces, Shri Govind Ballabh Pant²¹ has rightly described as the Peasants

19 When the Bihar Zamindari Abolition Bill was returned in March 1949 by the Governor General for reconsideration, the provincial legislature was reminded that as compensation payable under the act amounted to rupees one hundred and fifty crores, the provincial government should acquire land to the extent to which it could pay compensation or for which the landlords agreed to accept non negotiable bonds. The amended Bill incorporating these suggestions was passed by the provincial legislature on 25 April and received the Governor General's assent on 11 July 1949.

20 The salient features of the Bill introduced in the U P Assembly in July 1949 were: (1) acquisition of the intermediaries' land against payment of compensation; (2) a new system of land tenure to be evolved combining features of peasant proprietorship with the development of self governing village communities vested with ownership rights over common lands with powers of local administration and management; (3) encouragement of cooperative farming; (4) protection of interests of cultivators without proprietary rights; (5) restriction on the right of letting out land; and (6) ceiling on further acquisition of land by sale or gift.

21 (1887-1961) *Leading Congressman of U P*. *Chief Minister of U P* 1937-39 and 1946-55. *Union Home Minister* 1955-61.

Charter ²² These are the real ways of meeting the problems of the day and the sooner we get on with them the better In the United Provinces also thousands of self governing village panchayats have come into existence in the course of this year That is a great measure to bring democracy to the villages

26 In the same way other provinces are also going ahead with legislation Sometimes there is a tendency to lay stress on the moral aspect that is of improving people's morals by legislation ²³ It is good to try to improve morals but legislation is not always a successful method to do so Also the tendency to interfere with the private life of the individual is naturally resented and is seldom a safe way of dealing with anyone To some extent of course this has to be done but the less it is done the better

27 Talks in regard to the sterling balances in London are at present going on between the officials of the two Governments Our Finance Minister will be going to London soon in connection with these talks

28 It appears to be desirable from many points of view to encourage tourist traffic in India This will earn us foreign exchange but apart from this it will increase knowledge of India in foreign countries and make us also acquainted more with the outside world Provincial governments and of course the Central Government might take special steps to encourage this and to remove any restriction on it Unfortunately there are many restrictions and difficulties

29 I have received reports that our customs people do not leave a very good impression on foreigners or others who have to

22 Pant had said this at a press conference in Lucknow on 10 June 1949

23 A number of provinces had enacted legislation on prohibition

pass through their hands that our police sometimes become inquisitorial that visas take a long time in coming and so on. We are looking into this matter and I hope provincial governments will also look into this.

30 In this connection I might also mention that it is highly desirable to encourage tourist traffic to Kashmir. Kashmir is of course the ideal place for visitors to go to. It is cheaper than most places now and it is not difficult to go there more especially by air from Delhi. There is a permit system for military reasons but there is no difficulty in getting a permit.

31 I should like to mention one matter which has sometimes caused us embarrassment. Ministers or other prominent men or women who go abroad often demand interviews with Prime Ministers, Presidents and the like. Sometimes they approach them direct. This is against all convention. If an interview has to be sought it must be done through our Embassies and not directly. In fact all official approaches have to be made through our Embassies. It should be remembered also that there is no point in interviewing Prime Ministers, Presidents or other busy people unless there is some very special reason for it. Our Embassies will always help visitors from India but sometimes they are expected to do something which is beyond their power. They are expected to provide cars for visitors and make all kinds of other complicated arrangements. They cannot do so always as cars are limited. When possible of course even this will be done. We are criticised for our expenditure on our Missions abroad. If we increase this for the sake of our visitors abroad then we shall be criticised more.

32 I have not written much about the food situation not because my mind is not full of it but because I do not wish merely to repeat what I have already said. I hope to write to you separately and more fully on it before long. I do feel that somehow most people in India do not realise the importance of

it or what is more unfortunate still realising it they do not react properly to it *This state of mind has got to be remedied*

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 July, 1949

My dear Premier,

I shall begin this letter by drawing your attention to the broadcast I made last evening on the food situation ¹ You may have heard this or read it But for facility of reference I enclose a copy ² There is nothing very new in what I said, but I hope there is a new approach You will observe that we are appointing a Commissioner for Food Production His name will be announced soon He will be given large executive powers and we shall try to tone up our secretariat machinery to fit in with this conception If that old machinery does not suit an emergency effort then some other machinery will have to be devised One thing is certain that we must get going about this business and we cannot allow matters to drift, simply because the machine works slowly or some individual in the machine is incapable of moving fast

2 Whatever we may do at the Centre, the 'Grow More Food' problem remains essentially a provincial and state one, and everything depends on what the provinces and states do in this matter I would draw your special attention to the necessity for cooperation and coordination between the Centre and the provinces and states This is quite essential I trust that you will

1 In his broadcast Nehru called upon the people to make a success of Government's drive for raising food production to meet immediate shortages as well as for meeting long term needs so that food imports after 1951 could be stopped and war against hunger poverty malnutrition and high prices successfully fought

2 Not printed

take early steps to appoint a Commissioner for Food Production in your province or state and give him considerable powers

3 Food production in fact must be treated as a subject of the very first importance in your province. There has been a tendency in the past to leave it to some junior minister and to consider it as a relatively unimportant subject. I think this tendency is largely disappearing and there is a realisation that we must give of our best to this subject. I would suggest to you to consider this

4 We have thought of this food problem chiefly on the official level and yet it is not possible to tackle it effectively without enthusing the people and getting widespread support. If the Congress organisation would take up this in earnest, large numbers of our workers, who are apparently not doing much today, could be utilised for this essential work. Students could do it very well. Indeed, if we tried hard enough, we could shake up the whole country.

5 I am quite convinced that the problem is essentially a simple one. We have made it difficult by our complicated approaches to it on the purely official level, and we have relied too much on foreign imports.³ That was an easy way, but that meant piling up difficulties for the future. That future has become the present now and we have to pull ourselves up completely. Provincial governments, eager for all kinds of reforms, spread out their energy over many matters. Some of these no doubt are essential. But it seems to me that some certainly are not at all essential and in fact ought to be postponed. We cannot afford to give up any existing revenue at

³ For example, India had imported 7,90,000 tons of rice in 1949, being the largest purchase of rice from the world market.

the present moment ⁴ I am afraid some provinces have already gone too far in this direction in their zeal for reforming the individual *In the present context of things we must be clear about priorities and as to what comes first* Some provinces have given up substantial revenues and intend to give up more and, at the same time ask the Centre for grants and loans This is neither fair nor feasible

6 You must have seen that a grave economic crisis has suddenly descended upon England ⁵ This relates chiefly to dollars A meeting of Finance Ministers of the Commonwealth⁶ will be held about the middle of this month and our Finance Minister Dr Matthai is going to attend it In the United States there is a recession and a slowing down and this is having its effect in Europe Whether we are going towards a big slump or not I do not know In any event we have to pull ourselves up completely and not take any chances That is why I suggest that provincial governments must not fritter away their energies or their finances in furthering experiments which may be desirable in themselves but are inappropriate today

7 In my broadcast I have referred to the desirability of avoiding the use of polished rice This is not a fad but a scientific fact But as a matter of fact if polished rice was not

4 Madras Bombay the Central Provinces and some other provinces had suffered heavy loss of revenue due to enforcement of the policy of prohibition For example the loss of revenue from six districts of the Central Provinces was Rs 2 crores If the whole province had gone dry it would have meant foregoing revenue amounting to Rs 5 crores besides the expenditure involved in enforcement of the policy

5 Faced with the Indo Pakistan demand for sterling releases particularly in dollars and the American demand for devaluation Britain's gold and dollar reserves were not expected to last even two years at the current rate of spending The reserves were estimated to be less than 400 000 000 pounds sterling in June as compared to 471 000 000 pounds sterling at the end of March and 552 000 000 pounds at the beginning of the Marshall Aid Programme in 1948

6 It was held from 15 to 18 July 1949

used we will get ten per cent more out of the rice apart from other benefits. Some provinces have already taken steps in banning the production of fully polished rice. I hope your province will do something about this matter also. Probably the best solution is just slightly polished rice.

8 The experiment of not giving any cereal in the rations for one day in the week might be tried beginning with the cities. This can only be done if you have some adequate substitutes. During the coming monsoon there should be a drive for all people owning gardens and small pieces of land to grow one or more of the subsidiary foods that I have suggested or indeed any vegetable. This can easily be done during and immediately after the monsoon. After that lack of water may make it a little difficult in some places.

9 I wrote to you in my last letter about the South Calcutta bye election.⁷ Conditions in Calcutta still continue to be disturbing⁸ and petty incidents take place daily. It is true that newspaper accounts of these incidents produce an exaggerated picture in the mind of the reader as if the whole of Calcutta was in a state of turmoil. That of course is not so and Calcutta is carrying on its business on the whole as usual. Nevertheless it is true that there is a deep seated malaise in Calcutta and West Bengal. The bye election was one symptom of this and the more we look below the surface in Calcutta the more disturbing we find the conditions. West Bengal after the partition is one of the most heavily populated regions in the world. Calcutta is terribly overpopulated now with a very large number of refugees from East Pakistan. There is great unemployment more especially among the lower middle classes. A striking evidence of this was recently forthcoming when an advertisement asking for applications to fill about 30

⁷ See ante p. 381.

⁸ For instance the Congress Working Committee member Sucheta Kripalani was insulted and assaulted at the time of election. Occurrence of such incidents was on the increase.

places in some office elicited a vast number of replies running into many thousands

10 What is peculiarly distressing about Calcutta at present is the way certain anti social elements can influence the life of a great city Leaflets and pamphlets of a most objectionable and obscene character flood the city and generally there is a sense of insecurity and uncertainty Calcutta is a pointer to what might possibly happen elsewhere Therefore we have to understand *this Calcutta situation and profit by it Government must deal with it firmly from the law and order point of view* But it is perfectly clear that that is not enough and other approaches have to be made A government which has to rely on shooting frequently ceases to command the respect of the people ⁹

11 Another serious aspect is the way widespread charges of corruption are made against some departments Usually they are vague charges and it is not possible to enquire into them Sometimes more specific charges are put forward Whenever any responsible person or organisation puts forward a serious charge this must be enquired into In the same way where firing takes place on a crowd resulting in the death of some people there should be an automatic enquiry

12 Our delegation which went to Pakistan returned soon after ¹⁰ They arrived at an agreement with Pakistan about *exchange of commodities and this should be of help to us in exporting some of our goods* ¹¹ But the main purpose of this conference that is settling the problem of evacuee property

⁹ For example on 22 June the police had to open fire in South Calcutta on a procession that turned violent

¹⁰ The Indian trade delegation for the talks held in Karachi from 21 to 24 June was led by C C Desai N Gopalaswami Ayyangar was the leader of the delegation for the Inter Dominion talks on evacuee property held from 25 to 26 June

¹¹ An agreement for exchange of essential commodities was signed on 29 June 1949

was not fulfilled. Whatever the future may hold, we must realise that in the present little or nothing can be expected from Pakistan and we shall have to go our own way.

13 In my last letter I suggested to you that your province might pass an ordinance on the lines of the central ordinance regarding evacuee property.¹² I hope you will do so soon.

14 In Kashmir the deadlock continues and no way out is being found which would enable us to have a regular truce. The U N Commission is still working away although one of its senior members Dr Lozano has been called back to Colombia because of political changes there.

15 What is disturbing in regard to Kashmir is the continued concentration of troops by Pakistan on its Kashmir border and to some extent inside the Kashmir territory occupied by them. There is no apparent reason for these concentrations unless they are meant as a threat or for future war. Anyhow we have to be prepared for all consequences.

16 The Congress President sent the General Secretary¹³ of the Congress to enquire into certain charges made against Ministers.¹⁴ This is rather a novel procedure and it might lead to difficulties in the future. But the main fact to be remembered is that where serious charges are made against an individual or a group there should be some enquiry. That enquiry can be a confidential one to begin with and later public if necessary.

12 The ordinance was passed on 13 June 1949.

13 Shankarrao Deo (1894-1974) Congressman of Maharashtra, member of Congress Working Committee, 1938-50.

14 This was to hold a preliminary enquiry into the charges levelled against six Madras ministers by T. Prakasam, former Premier of Madras, and certain other Congressmen.

17 In China the advance of the Communist armies continues. At the same time the old Nationalist Government is apparently organising its own forces in Formosa and some parts of South China. There was even some bombing by Nationalist planes in Shanghai. It is doubtful if this attempt of the Kuomintang forces to check the Communist armies will make very much difference. It might lead to delay and to pockets of resistance in some parts of China. The main strength of the Communist armies lies in the failure of the Nationalist Government to introduce agrarian and other reforms and the complete lack of faith of the Chinese people in that government. The problem therefore is not just a military one. In this connection it may interest you to read a small note I have had prepared about the economic policy of the Chinese Communist Government.¹⁵ This is enclosed.¹⁶ It is evident from this as well as from other recent happenings that the Communist authorities in China are not attempting to make a clean sweep of the existing economic structure. They do propose introducing far reaching reforms in land as well as in industry. But they are still giving a good deal of scope to foreign business enterprise and capital. They are more anxious to increase production and efficiency than merely to bring about some change in the structure.

18 In Burma the position of Thakin Nu's Government has improved a little though the situation is still very complex. The Burmese Government has indicated that they are not in any

15 The note prepared by K P S Menon on 21 June 1949 stated that the Communist revolution touches the very foundation of the Chinese society and recognised that the peasant has to be resuscitated. Accordingly the land laws abolished landlordism gave the right to the peasant unions in villages to take over all land for equal distribution and secured the rights of sale and lease of the new owners of land. The new industrial policy envisaged the confiscation of capital owned by influential families a ban on import of consumer goods the assurance of payment to workers commensurate with their productive capacity and the nationalization of industries.

16 Not printed

immediate need of financial aid. This is largely due to their suspicions of foreign powers. It is well known that some foreigners have encouraged the Karen rebellion and because of this the Burmese Government view with suspicion any foreign approach.

19 In Indonesia the Dutch troops have withdrawn from Jogjakarta and Indonesian troops are taking possession of that city and the area attached to it called the Residency. This is one step forward towards a possible settlement. It is proposed to have a round table conference at The Hague to consider what other steps should be taken. While we should congratulate ourselves at something having been done at last we must remember at the same time that very little has thus far been done and the immediate future is full of difficulties. In Indonesia itself there is no great enthusiasm because of their inherent suspicion of Dutch motives.

20 You must have learnt of the result of the referendum in Chandernagore.¹⁷ That is a good beginning and we hope that the formal transfer of this town will take place before long. Chandernagore has been a refuge for anti social elements from Calcutta. Even now it has been used for this purpose.

21 In the states in India and the states' unions progress has been made towards the abolition of the jagirdari system and reforms in agrarian tenure.

22 In Hyderabad some reforms have already been introduced and a high power committee is considering further land reforms.¹⁸ A Labour Enquiry Committee has also been appointed. A regulation on the jagirdari system is awaiting approval now. Legislation is also being considered in Hyderabad for the removal of all social disabilities of Harijans. Electoral rolls have been completed and it is proposed to hold

¹⁷ In the referendum held on 19 June the people had overwhelmingly voted in favour of integration with India.

¹⁸ See *ante* p. 379.

election to the Hyderabad Constituent Assembly by the end of this year

23 The Travancore Cochin Union takes effect from today 1st July Rampur state has also been taken over today by the Centre and will have the status of a Chief Commissioner's province Ultimately Rampur is likely to be absorbed in the United Provinces Tehri Garhwal state will be absorbed in the United Provinces on the 1st of August

24 In Mysore a supplementary Instrument of Accession has been signed extending the list of subjects of accession¹⁹ This practically brings Mysore into line with provinces in regard to central subjects

25 At a conference of Rajpramukhs held in April last²⁰ it was agreed that the various states unions should work under the general control of the Government of India and should comply with particular directions that may be issued from the Centre The Central Government is appointing advisers to the Union Ministries

26 We have appointed Shri A A A Fyze²¹ as our Ambassador at Cairo Shri Fyze is an eminent scholar in both Persian and Arabic and has held responsible posts in India We attach importance to this post at Cairo as it governs our relations with countries in the Middle East

27 It has been decided to establish diplomatic relations with Austria This will not involve the appointment of a new Minister as our Minister in Switzerland will also represent us in Austria

19 On 27 June 1949

20 See *ante* p 121

21 (1899 1981) Principal Government Law College Bombay 1938 47 member Public Service Commission Bombay 1947 49 Ambassador to Egypt 1949 51 member U P S C 1952 57 later Vice Chancellor Jammu and Kashmir University

28 In view of the economic situation in India and the world strict directives have been issued to all the Ministries and Departments of Government to economise and avoid any expenditure which is not considered absolutely necessary. In future delegations from India to international conferences will be strictly limited and wherever possible we shall only send one or two observers or delegates drawn from our embassies abroad. We are thinking of having some additional members of our staffs in New York and in London and possibly at Geneva who might serve these delegations abroad. This will lead to greater efficiency and less expense.

29 We have made a rule here at the Centre that no one should be sent abroad on government business without special reference to External Affairs and the Prime Minister. I suggest to you that similar care might be exercised in your province in incurring any expenditure which might involve the use of foreign exchange.

30 All this leads to a tightening up all round on the expenditure side and a special concentration on food production. I greatly regret that some of our important activities might suffer on this account and might have to be postponed. But there is no help for it. If we do not make good on the food front and generally in avoiding expenditure of foreign money our difficulties will increase very greatly and anyhow our other schemes would be held up. So it is important to devote our energies to this 'Grow More Food' business. Our success in that will make our position in regard to other matters very much stronger. It would produce confidence in the country and a spirit of self reliance will grow. May I again emphasise that this food problem cannot be tackled merely on the official level? We must draw voluntary workers, organisations and the public generally into the picture. We should state the facts frankly and squarely and make the people understand the position and seek their cooperation. That cooperation may of course help greatly certain executive or

legislative action I shall be grateful if you could send me periodically with your fortnightly letter or separately a brief account of the Grow More Food Campaign in your province both from the official and the public point of view As I have stated in my broadcast I want to address myself to the public at least once a month on this issue and the facts that you supply me will help me to do so

31 It has been suggested that some kind of rewards might be given to specific areas for the Grow More Food Campaign This might be examined I rather think it will involve complicated enquiries and calculations if the reward is in the nature of a partial remission of land revenue I think that some simpler method should be evolved If a village does well government should give it some additional facility or some grant for development Individual farmers or other workers who do well might be given certificates or a scroll of honour Meetings might be organised where these certificates or scrolls are presented and particular villages who have done well mentioned I have no doubt other methods will suggest themselves to you

32 We have had to deal in the past two years with very difficult law and order problems and we have been forced to enact legislation both at the Centre and in the provinces which is in the nature of repressive legislation We have done so with the greatest reluctance because the safety of the State was the paramount consideration for us On the whole we have succeeded in checking dangerous anti social elements It is true however that we have been strongly criticised for this legislation both at the Centre and in the provinces and the fact that large numbers of people have been kept under detention has not added to our general credit as governments

33 I think it is time that we reviewed this position fully It is true that there are dangerous elements abroad It is obvious that the Communist Party of India is openly bent on pursuing

violent methods trying to create disorder and chaos. Their objective appears to be a purely negative one, because it is quite clear that they cannot make much difference to India if they proceeded on democratic lines. In any general election in India, they will not make much difference. Therefore, neither the Centre nor any province can lessen its vigilance. We can take no risk where the interests of the State are concerned. More particularly, any attempt at violence must be severely put down. It must be made absolutely clear that any violent methods against the State will be dealt with with the greatest firmness. At the same time, where violence is not involved, we should adopt a far more generous attitude. We have been criticised a great deal by High Courts, and many people who have been detained, have been released by High Courts, on applications being made under the habeas corpus provisions. We have to take note of this fact. It has also been stated that certain provisions in our security legislation come in the way of labour organisations etc. These must also be reviewed. In other words, while we should proceed firmly with every attempt at violence in regard to other matters we should refrain, as far as possible from repressive action. Naturally it is for provincial governments to judge what is absolutely necessary and what is not. In judging, they have to bear in mind the effect on public opinion as also the fact that continued repression is apt to lose its particular value as a preventive.

34 The other point I should like to draw your particular attention to is the charge that is made of corruption in government departments more particularly in regard to civil supplies licences etc.²² Many of these charges are vague and it is difficult to enquire into them. But wherever a specific charge is made it should be enquired into. The public should be made to feel that every government in India is anxious and eager and alert to put an end to corruption in any shape or form. What

²² For instance there was a demand for an enquiry into the issue of permits for steel in East Punjab at this time.

usually happens is that a number of small people are proceeded against and convicted but the big offenders usually get away. It is really the big offenders that count and not the smaller fry.

35 I have been greatly pained to see the general drift in some of our periodicals as well as in pamphlets and leaflets towards not only irresponsibility but indecency. Leaflets and pamphlets issued in Calcutta are amazingly bad and even obscene. The most irresponsible statements are made. Even in other cities some of our weekly press specially is descending to levels which astonish and distress me. I do not know what can be done about this because we do not wish to interfere with the press as far as possible. But surely the leaders of the press themselves should be made to realise that all this is degrading the press as well as the nation.

36 Day after tomorrow I am going to Leh in Ladakh on a brief visit. I am not going there for pleasure though I have no doubt that I shall enjoy that visit to the high mountains. I am going there because I think that my visit there will bear good results from many points of view. It is a very brief visit and I shall return to Delhi on the 9th morning.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 July 1949

My dear Premier,*

Any policy or programme that we might adopt about the Grow More Food Campaign depends largely on the statistics or production that come to us. Without proper statistics we can form no opinion whatever of progress made or the reverse. What are our present figures based on? I take it that, in the final analysis, they are based on a *patwaris* report. It may be taken for granted that this report is incorrect. Therefore our figures have no substantial basis. Probably they are underestimates of production because the tendency of the grower will be to give a lower figure. Whether they are underestimates or not, they are not precise and cannot be relied upon.

What then is to be done about it? I cannot make a very definite suggestion except that we should immediately try to improve our statistical methods. It is not possible to have a widespread statistical survey of production. What is possible is to have sample surveys of several selected regions and then compare the results with previous figures received. This will give us some indication. I suggest to you therefore to have such sample surveys made as soon as possible. It will be necessary to repeat this process from time to time. The effect of some sample surveys may also improve the *patwaris* report because then they will know that there is a possibility of checking.

I am having this matter looked into by our statistical department also. But you need not wait for directions from them and you can go ahead immediately.

* A special letter in addition to the fortnightly Letters

In my fortnightly letter I have drawn attention to polished rice I hope your province will take some action about this if it has not already done so

Further I think that we should consider how to reduce the consumption of rice in areas which are predominantly wheat eating Those areas should not get any rice at all from outside The amount of waste of rice in public restaurants is prodigious I do not know how rations are computed or split up as between wheat and rice in various places It might be possible by a readjustment of rations to lessen the rice quota and increase the wheat

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
2 July, 1949

My dear Premier,*

The U P Government have been experimenting with village reorganisation in a particular way in Etawah District. This experiment¹ includes in its scope a great many things including more production of food. The experiment is in charge of an eminent American planner, Mr Albert Mayer.² Mr Mayer has at my request sent me a note on this Etawah Pilot Development Project and I feel that I should share it with you. It might be of some help to your government, more especially in regard to rural planning and more food production. I am, therefore enclosing a copy of this note for you.³

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

1 The Etawah pilot project launched on 15 September 1948 in village Mahewa 30 km east of Etawah city aimed at improving the economic conditions of the people by increasing the productivity of the land and through development of rural industries and cooperatives. The other objective of the project was to promote the mental and moral development of the people by initiating programmes to improve their knowledge and skills and inculcate in them the ideas of self government through panchayats. The project was financed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

2 (b 1897) Architect and town planner. Planning and Development Adviser to U P Government 1948-52. drew the master plans for Greater Bombay Chandigarh Delhi—New Delhi Gujarat University Allahabad Agricultural Institute taught architecture and town planning in American Universities.

3 By 1956 the project covered 334 villages. The success of the project paved the way for the United States Technical Cooperation Agreement of 1952 for expansion of the community development programme launched on 2 October 1952.

You will notice that this project is a multiple one and that it was started only nine months ago. Some definite and promising results have already been obtained in the unit of sixty four villages in which it is functioning. After a little more experience of results, it is proposed to extend the area to about six hundred villages. With the experience thus gained, the whole province can be dealt with in this fashion.

The important point to note is that social improvement is aimed at so as to make the average villager a better man, a better worker and citizen and more cooperative. Also that the material to be used has to be easily obtainable and relatively cheaper. In the process of doing this work people are trained so that they can carry on the work themselves later in other places. The whole object is not to disturb the roots of the people and yet to raise them to higher levels.

I suggest that this all round approach is worthy of your consideration.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
20 July 1949

My dear Premier

I am sorry for the slight delay in sending you my fortnightly letter. Many of you will be coming up to Delhi soon and we shall meet and discuss various matters.¹ Nevertheless I am writing to you this letter to draw your attention to certain happenings during the last fortnight.

2 I have had some rather unique experiences during the last fortnight. I went to Ladakh in the far north between the Himalayan and the Karakoram ranges and spent a few brief days there. I could write to you much about my visit because Ladakh is a little known area and deserves notice for a variety of reasons. It is as you know a frontier area and on the airfield near Leh there was a signpost pointing out directions to Tibet, China, the Soviet Union, and other surrounding countries. The average altitude of the lower valleys of Ladakh is 11 500 feet. The higher valleys go up to 15 000 feet. The people approximate to the Tibetans in appearance, religion, culture and dress. Lamaism, that is a form of Buddhism, flourishes there and the influence of the Lamas is great. There are undoubtedly some able and erudite scholars among them, but the great majority seemed to me to be very ignorant and unlearned. Little care had been bestowed on the piles of old manuscripts lying in the monasteries. The people generally are very poor, but tough and rather jolly.

¹ A number of them had come for discussions held from 17 to 24 July on the Draft Constitution. They also attended the food conference on 23 July.

3 Soon after my return from Ladakh I went to Calcutta and saw an entirely different scene ² You may have read about some of my adventures in Calcutta ³ They were not only personal adventures but had a political significance and indeed the Congress Working Committee has been giving a great deal of thought to developments in West Bengal This not only because of the importance of West Bengal but also because in a sense they were symbolic of many of our problems all over India

4 As I stood in the small gardens or much more frequently the bleak wastes of Ladakh I thought of the infinite variety of our country A few days later I was in Calcutta and my thoughts turned to Ladakh and compared and contrasted these two entirely different scenes There could be no greater difference between any two parts of the earth's surface however far one travelled And yet both these were India as also much else which was different from either How many of us have an understanding and an emotional appreciation of this tremendous richness and variety of India Because we do not wholly appreciate this even though we might talk about it sometimes we try often enough to regiment the whole of India into a single pattern Wherever we may be we think that we are in the heart of India and represent the quintessence of India's culture and tradition and that the others are rather near the outer pale and their chief function is to fall in line with us That approach seems to me to be far from reality as it ignores not only the facts as they are in India but also the age-long tradition of India which allowed each culture to have scope for growth and did not try to coerce it into a single

2 He went to Calcutta from 12 to 14 July to study the political situation. He also utilised the opportunity to meet the members of rival Congress groups

3 At the Shambazar crossing a small crowd had shouted "Go back Nehru" and hurled stones and shoes at the Prime Minister's car At a public meeting on 14 July leaflets were thrown and a bomb exploded on a police picket resulting in the death of one constable and injury to three others

pattern. Modern conditions of life, new methods of swift transportation and communication inevitably tend to produce a certain uniformity and regimentation. Whether that is a good thing or not may be a matter for argument. But deliberate attempts to accelerate this process are hardly likely to succeed and in the measure they succeed they may deaden something that is bright and make lustreless what has been vital in our national life.

5 All these thoughts came to me in Ladakh and I further thought how wise our ancestors were in their large hearted tolerance and human understanding. It would be well with India. I mused if we of the present generation had also a measure of that tolerance and human touch. Culture like a flower does not take kindly to forced growth and like a flower again it fades away in an environment not suited to it. Compulsion crushes it and makes it lifeless.

6 Ladakh is a far away corner of India yet it is India. Kashmir proper is nearer in every way geographically and otherwise to India and yet it has its peculiar characteristics quite apart from its astonishing beauty. It has been in the past one of the greatest seats of the old Indian culture and yet because of the very environment it developed in its own way. Inevitably even the external emblems of our life like food and clothing differ somewhat with geography and climate. India is considered generally a country where it is normally hot. That of course is true. But India also has the high mountains and the snow covered peaks and people who live in these colder climates put on fur lined boots and heavy coats or else they would not survive. India, therefore displays both the bare foot or the *chappal* encasing it and these fur lined boots of the north. Vast numbers of Indians wear the dhot in various forms. Yet this dress is an impossible one in the mountain valleys of the north where in winter the temperature is far below zero and even in summer bitterly cold winds blow.

7 So, as we build the mighty structure of free and Republican India, let us remember all these innumerable faces that India has and provide for them. Let us not try to remould any of them forcibly to conform to our particular conception of what India is.

8 I have many impressions of my visit to Ladakh, but three stand out. The first is of my flying over the Himalayas and looking down at a magnificent spectacle of ice covered peaks, glaciers and snow fields. That is a sight I can never forget. My second picture is that of a vast wilderness of sand and rock with occasional caves on the banks of the Indus or where water came down from the glaciers. Across these sandy wastes we travelled, sometimes slowly and wearily and sometimes galloping as fast as the mountain ponies would carry us. At brief intervals we would come across a monastery, usually perched on a hill top, commanding a view of the surrounding country. That monastery looked as if it was a natural growth from the rock itself. It fitted in with that bare and bleak scene.

9 My third memory of Ladakh is that of a moonlit night on the banks of the Indus. The river shone like burnished silver, and in the background, there were mountains with snow on their peaks, also glistening in the moonlight. The Indus which gave India her name and which, in its later stages, becomes a mighty river, sweeping down to the sea, was here a mountain stream with something of the frolic and playfulness of youth. The sound of its flowing waters was very pleasant to hear, even as the sight of its glistening surface was a delight to the eyes.

10 From this part of India, where nature is dominant and triumphant, I went to Calcutta, where five or six million human beings now dwell. The scene changed completely and the problems that faced me there were utterly different. Here nature was not very obvious, only man and his works and his conflicts were evident. West Bengal, like Ladakh, was also a frontier province of India, a frontier created rather brutally by

the partition. As a result of that partition it had suffered greatly and had become the most densely populated province of India. It was a province which was far more urban in its general outlook than any other province of India. Indeed a very large part of this population lived in the great city of Calcutta. Unemployment of the lower middle classes especially had risen very greatly and there was a general sense of frustration and annoyance at the new turn of the wheel of fate and at those who were supposed to ignore the claims of Bengal. Many people outside Bengal are apt to pay little attention to this deep seated malaise of that province. But it would be wrong and foolish not to try to understand what is passing through the mind and soul of West Bengal today, and it would be ungenerous for us in the rest of India not to try to help the people of West Bengal in every way possible to us.

11 The problems there were many but there could be little doubt that there was general dissatisfaction against the provincial government and the provincial Congress. The people generally appeared to be passive and inert while a handful committed outrages from day to day. Yet the magnificent meeting—the biggest I have ever addressed⁴—was significant evidence that the people of Calcutta had not cast away their old love in search for a new

12 During the last two or three days the Working Committee have given very earnest consideration to the problems of West Bengal. They have come to no final decision yet but they have felt that the present situation should not be allowed to drift. There has been some delay in their decision because the West Bengal Premier, Dr B C Roy, had gone abroad for treatment of his eyes.⁵ Nevertheless I hope that the

4 About a million people had gathered at the parade ground.

5 He had gone to Switzerland on 23 June to consult an eye specialist in Zurich. During his absence N R. Sarkar acted as the Premier.

which creates barriers of ill will. Goodwill and an attempt at friendly cooperation are not only good in themselves but also pay dividends in the end.

15 West Bengal has many lessons for each province and for all of us in India. So far as the Congress organisation is concerned, it demonstrates the fatal consequences of divisions and factions which weaken and disable the Congress and tend to disintegrate all public life. Such divisions and factions are seldom due to any differences in matters of principle or policy; usually they are caused by personal rivalries and jealousies. If the Congress has to continue as a historic force shaping the destinies of India, it must pull itself up and put an end to these internal divisions. That does not mean suppression of opinions or a regimentation of all those who are within the wide folds of the Congress. But it does mean observance of a certain wider discipline and tolerance and capacity for joint action.

16 Another lesson is that we must tackle with all our strength the problem of effective and efficient administration. The public is prepared to put up with much if it is convinced that every effort is being made to fight the evils that surround us. If once they lose faith in the *bona fides* of a government or an administration, then even the good it does carries little weight with them. There is a great deal of talk about corruption in India today and it has become almost a fashion even for Congress leaders to refer to it. Our opponents of course revel in such charges. I think that much of this is exaggerated and that probably there has been a marked improvement in various provinces. In any event, it does not do much good to shout about this and thus create the very atmosphere in which corruption flourishes.

But the fact remains that there is a good deal of corruption. Much of this is a wartime legacy and I am afraid that our merchant classes and many large scale producers of goods have been involved in this. Also a part of the government apparatus

more especially our transport system which is often given great inducements for showing partiality. It is our business to tackle this problem with all our strength. I have no doubt that provincial governments have done so. But usually it is only the smaller people who are caught and punished. The big sinners escape because they have long purses and other means at their disposal to frustrate justice. It is these big persons who set an example to others and the people are more concerned with them than with the smaller fry.

17 We have a large number of big schemes for development all over the country and governments are also interested in measures of social reform. All these are no doubt important. But at the present juncture it is far more important to deal with the immediate problems which confront us such as tightening and purifying of the administration, the food problem and the aspects of the economic problem which affect us immediately and which might be remedied. The refugees also claim immediate attention.

18 Measures of social reform may be divided up into two categories. One is the abolition of the zamindari system and land reform. This of course is of the highest importance as it affects millions of people and has already been delayed too long. It is the basis for further progress. In this connection I might add that it has surprised me to learn that in some parts of India ejectment of tenants is still going on on a fairly considerable scale. In particular this is taking place in Jodhpur and Jaipur in Rajasthan. But complaints have come to me from some provinces also. It seems obvious that such ejectments should not be countenanced and some steps should be taken to stop it while legislation to replace the zamindari and jagirdari systems is being considered. This ejectment is not only unjust as a rule but in the present economic temper of the country it is definitely a dangerous procedure.

19 The second type of social legislation might be said to aim

at the improvement of the individual. That is good in its way provided it does not produce a contrary reaction as such legislation sometimes does. The improvement of the individual is not an easy matter for any State to undertake by legislation so long as there is not a widespread public opinion in favour of that legislation. Opinions also differ as to what is the best method to do it and as to the objectives to be aimed at. Then again if such attempts lead to a shrinkage of public revenue in the present circumstances the good they might do might well be outbalanced by the harm. Therefore it is desirable to go slow with such steps and to concentrate on the more important and urgent problems of the day. We cannot afford to irritate various sections of public opinion on matters of secondary importance or to give up revenues when our need is greatest.

20 As you know the ban on the R S S has been removed. Also that there has been some kind of a general gaol delivery.⁶ This does not mean that we are convinced about the *bona fides* of the R S S movement although they have promised to behave in future. All it means is that we feel that we must gradually relax the abnormal measures that we have taken in restricting the normal liberties of the individual and the group whatever that might be. We do not propose to relax in the slightest our vigilance and we shall take instant action whenever necessary. But such action loses its value when it becomes a normal action of the State. We have been criticised a great deal for our restriction of civil liberties. That criticism may be justified *in vacuo* but it is to be considered in relation to the extraordinary circumstances which we have had to face during the past two years. We were compelled to take that action because the safety and security of the State and the great majority of our people were concerned. Nevertheless it is true that such repressive legislation has a bad odour about it and it creates the wrong mentality both in government and the

6 The ban was lifted on 12 July following an affirmation by M S Golwalkar, chief of the R S S, of complete loyalty to the Union Constitution and respect for the Union flag. Golwalkar was released from jail on 13 July.

people Therefore, it is our intention so far as possible, not to have such permanent or even temporary legislation on the statute book but rather to deal with an emergency, if and when it arises We hope to do it with the cooperation of the public, which we must always seek, and we shall get that cooperation more if we adopt this new policy I commend this policy to your government

21 It is clear, however, that in many parts of the country the situation is far from satisfactory The new growth of the cult of violence and terrorism has resulted in a large number of individual murders, more especially in Andhra and in West Bengal ⁷ This kind of thing has to be met with all vigour We see a curious combination of what might be termed communistic terrorism which has little to do even with communism Thus our general relaxation in the field of civil liberties will certainly not mean the slightest relaxation in meeting violence against the individual or the State, wherever it occurs and whatever form it might take

22 Recently, I visited Lucknow chiefly because it was announced in the press that a new group had been formed within the Congress Party of the legislature ⁸ This seemed to us a dangerous development which must be stopped, and I am glad to say that my visit to Lucknow led to the dissolution of this new group ⁹ The question is a wider one and all Congress parties in the legislature and Congress governments should give thought to it While there must be full opportunities given to an opposition to flourish in a legislature and a responsible opposition is a good thing, there is no justification whatever for the Congress Party itself to split up into hostile groups

7 Reports of murders came from Nalgonda and Warangal districts in Andhra and acts of violence had continued in West Bengal

8 60 out of 165 members of the Congress Legislative Party had formed a separate group to keep a check on the Ministers

9 It was dissolved on 19 July 1949

Therefore the discipline of these Congress parties in the legislature must be maintained and no formation of groups within them permitted. That is the view of the Congress Working Committee. But another consequence follows from this and that is this. The government or Ministry of a province must itself not be based on a group within the party. The leader should choose his Ministers on the basis of the best available talent. Sometimes it so happens that there is a contest for leadership and then the chosen leader appoints his Ministers from those who voted for him. This results automatically in the other group becoming more isolated and thinking in terms of the group in opposition. It tries to convert the minority into a majority. All these tendencies can be avoided if the leader deals with the party as a whole in choosing Ministers and others. Ultimately the cohesion of the party depends on the personality of the leader and he should always remember that he is the leader of the party as a whole and not of a group within the party. If he functions as a group leader then rival groups necessarily begin to take shape. We must therefore view this problem as a whole and prevent the formation and functioning of groups within the party by drawing into the administration the best people from the party.

23 I hope your government has taken steps to put up a special Emergency Food Production Department and appointed a Commissioner of Food Production with special powers. In the Centre as you know Shri R. K. Patil¹⁰ till lately Food Minister of the Central Provinces Government has been appointed Commissioner for Food Production and he has been given considerable powers to take action outside the normal routine method. While governments should function on an emergency basis in this matter it is essential that public

10 (b 1907) Joined I.C.S. 1930 and resigned 1943. Minister for Food and Agriculture Madhya Pradesh 1946-49. Food Commissioner Government of India 1949-52. member Planning Commission 1950-53. member study team to China 1956 and Yugoslavia 1959. later joined Vinoba Bhave's Sarvodaya movement.

we shall have to cut down our dollar expenditure rigorously. Even visits abroad of officials have to be curtailed. No one should be sent abroad unless it is for absolute necessity.

26 After considerable thought we have appointed Professor S Radhakrishnan¹² as our Ambassador in Moscow. This post is of vital significance and we wanted a man of outstanding ability and reputation to fill it. We are happy that Prof Radhakrishnan has agreed to go there.

27 At the present moment, a Military Conference is being held in Karachi to determine the ceasefire line between the two Forces.¹³ It is difficult to say whether this conference will lead to a full agreement or not.¹⁴ There is no doubt that the determination of such a line clearly would be to the advantage of all parties concerned and would prevent incidents.

28 In Indonesia events are marching forward, the Republic has taken possession of Jogjakarta and is going to send its representatives to the conference at The Hague. In view of this development we have removed the ban on the KLM services across India,¹⁵ and we are sending immediately our Ambassador, Dr M S Mehta,¹⁶ to The Hague. We hope that some of the Indonesian leaders on their way to The Hague will stop at Delhi for consultations with us.

12 (1888-1975) Professor of Philosophy at Calcutta University 1921-31 and 1937-41 and Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford University 1936-52. Ambassador to the Soviet Union 1949-52. Vice-President of India 1952-62. President of India 1962-67.

13 An Indo-Pakistan joint military conference to demarcate a ceasefire line in Kashmir opened in Karachi on 18 July. The Indian delegation was led by Lt Gen S M Srinagesh.

14 On 26 July India and Pakistan agreed on a ceasefire line for the entire Jammu and Kashmir state.

15 A seven-month ban imposed on 23 December 1948 following the Dutch military action against the Republicans in Indonesia was lifted by the Government of India on 20 July 1949.

16 (1895-1985) Chief Minister of Mewar state 1944-47. Ambassador to the Netherlands 1949-51. High Commissioner to Pakistan 1951-55. Ambassador to Switzerland and Austria 1955-58. Vice-Chancellor, University of Rajasthan 1960-66.

29 In China Communist forces are marching south. Meanwhile the old Nationalist Government has expressed its determination to fight on. It is rather doubtful how far it will succeed. Reaction to events in China has been marked in Tibet and the Tibetan Government are trying to send away the Chinese in Lhasa and elsewhere as they are afraid of communist activity there.

30 In Burma the situation appears slightly to improve from the government's point of view. But conditions are still fluid. Indians in Burma have suffered a great deal owing to the civil war and many are isolated in the rebel areas and we have tried to evacuate them.

31 We addressed the Government of the Union of South Africa and offered to join in a round table conference to consider the question of Indians in South Africa. This was in pursuance of the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We had a reply which is on the whole friendly in tone but which nevertheless has certain provisions attached to it. We are in further communication with the South African Government. It is clear that we can hope little from such a conference if it takes place as the two viewpoints are fundamentally opposed to each other. Nevertheless it is our intention to pursue this matter to the end so that we may act up to the direction of the United Nations. If the South African Union Government puts up impossible conditions then of course the matter will end there.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 August 1949

My dear Premier

The Congress Working Committee has met here during the last fortnight and considered *two matters of great importance*. In my last letter I had given some indication of the steps the Working Committee were going to recommend in regard to West Bengal. You will have seen the resolutions that they have issued both in regard to West Bengal¹ and Madras².

2 I would particularly like to draw your attention to the procedure in regard to complaints which has been clearly laid down in the Madras resolution. There has been far too much loose talk about corruption etc. and Congressmen have been rushing to the press. Now a definite and precise procedure has been laid down for the members of the Congress Party of the Legislature. They must approach the leader of the party who is also the Premier in all the provinces. It is for the Premier to enquire into any charge made. At a later stage if necessary the matter may come up before the Working Committee or the Central Parliamentary Board.

3 Another resolution of the Working Committee which is important and to which I drew your attention in my last letter

1 The resolution of 28 July recommended fresh elections to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly and the West Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

2 The resolution stated that the charges against the ex ministers looked into by Shankarrao Deo were without foundation. Accordingly the Premier of Madras was asked to review the cases and report.

was in regard to grouping within a party³ This kind of grouping cannot possibly be tolerated But it is not enough to condemn an opposition group growing up It is the responsibility of the leader of the party to prevent any such tendency from spreading and to function always as leader of the full party and not as that of the group If a majority group functions as a group then the consequence must necessarily be that the minority also functions as a group

4 The Premier⁴ of one of our provincial governments wrote to me a few days ago⁵ expressing his distress at what he called the frustration of the public sense of social justice awakened by our achievement of freedom He went on to say We want discipline in Congress ranks and purity in public life How can we secure this when highest rank Congressmen do not observe discipline and escape the consequences? We support and countenance the rich in their impure deeds and turn all our machinery of purification against the poor The rich employ newspapers who pervert truth and do false propaganda lawyers who defend them and agents who go to the length of purloining State documents and bribe heavily and yet they are kept in countenance by their association with highly placed Congressmen It is not the poor and the lowly but the rich and the highly placed who need purification This cry of distress from one of our most valued colleagues and a head of a great administration deserves the closest attention from all of us Whatever policies we may pursue it is of the highest importance that we should fight the evils that are corroding our public life How can we fight them if we ourselves are not above suspicion or if we harbour and shelter those who are

3 The resolution of 28 July disapproved publicity being given to charges made by Congress members of the legislatures against Ministers as being violative of the discipline of the Congress

4 B G Kher (1888 1957) Solicitor and Congressman of Bombay Chief Minister of Bombay 1937 39 and 1946 52 High Commissioner in London 1952 54 Chairman Official Language Commission 1955 56

5 On 25 July 1949

suspected of indulging in those evil deeds? There can be no compromise with evil or else we will be swamped by that evil ourselves

5 There is one matter which is bad in itself and which also leads to evil consequences That is the interference of M L As in the administration Members of the Assembly have no business to interfere in this way with the local administration If they do so they free the district officers from all responsibility and then nobody is responsible The whole structure of the British administration in the past was built up on the district officer That structure must necessarily change when a democratic set up comes into being Nevertheless the district officer remains in a key position and should be responsible for what happens in his district If M L As interfere in appointments in transfers in the grant of licences etc then all responsibility vanishes and nepotism and corruption creep in

6 As I wrote in my last letter I think that there is a great deal of exaggeration in all this talk of corruption in the country But I am deeply concerned even with what exists and more especially with the disruptive tendencies that are in evidence The only way to check them is to pull ourselves up completely and refuse to have any truck with the evil doer The Congress built up its strength because under the inspiration of our great leader we set high standards of public life We dare not fall from the standards we then set up We shall be judged by those very standards and not by the other opportunist standards which often prevail in public life

7 The Constituent Assembly is now on the last lap of its long journey It is more than two and a half years since it first met and during this period mighty changes have taken place in India The Assembly has however continued its work in spite of changes and upheavals It is hoped that during the month of August it will finish the second reading of the Constitution

That will practically finalise the Constitution the third reading merely giving formality to it later. During this month of August we shall have to deal with many important matters which have been held over.

8 One of the matters to which we have given a great deal of thought is the question of citizenship or nationality. It is easy enough to frame a law for citizenship but we had two difficulties to face. One of these was caused by the partition of India and the tremendous migrations that have taken place.⁶ The other dealt with the question of Indians abroad.⁷ In the Draft that is being placed before the Assembly an attempt has been made to meet both these difficulties. Indians abroad will be able to continue their Indian nationality if they so choose. It is clear that they cannot have a double nationality and some kind of choice will have to be made. In the case however of some of the British colonial territories like Malaya it will be possible for an Indian national to have citizenship rights there.

9 Delhi has experienced a tremendous and unprecedented downpour of rain. We had thirteen inches in about two days. The streets were flooded and large numbers of refugees suffered tremendous hardships. Many of the houses that were being built for them were washed away and the temporary sheds which they had built for themselves largely collapsed. This created an urgent and difficult problem for us. We have with a great effort made temporary arrangements for these refugees. The Army came to our help with some barracks and

6 Under the Constitution an immigrant from Pakistan became a citizen of India if he or either of his parents or grandparents was born in undivided India and had either migrated to India before 19 July 1948 or had been registered as an Indian citizen after that date.

7 The Constitution allowed any person whose parents or grandparents were born in India but who was residing abroad to become an Indian citizen by registration. However no person could secure Indian citizenship if he acquired the citizenship of any foreign State.

His Excellency the Governor General also gave us quarters attached to the Government House

10 In spite of every effort, our rehabilitation work for the refugees has been slow I do not think that there has been any lack of hard work or of goodwill But the colossal magnitude of the problem and the lack of sufficient resources have prevented an adequate tackling of the problem I think that we are proceeding now with some speed We hope that by the end of October, all our camps will have either been wound up or turned into work centres A large number of townships are growing up and the Governor General is soon going to Bombay to lay the foundation of a new town for refugees⁸

11 The Karachi negotiations between the military representatives of India and Pakistan have resulted in an agreement on demarcating the ceasefire line⁹ It should be remembered that this is nothing more than fixing the ceasefire line which came into existence, rather vaguely on the 1st January This has nothing to do with the truce line or with any other matter This was very largely a military question and was dealt with, therefore by our military advisers The whole question for consideration was 'what was the position on the 1st January?' Normally there should have been no great difficulty, when armies face one another But over large tracts, winter conditions were so severe that the armies were not in touch with one another Some people may be disappointed at the new line that has been fixed This is understandable because, in our view, Pakistan should not be there at all They should really retire completely from Kashmir territory But that brings in various political considerations which have no place in a pure ceasefire matter They have place if the truce line is discussed As a result of the ceasefire arrangement, Pakistan armies will have to withdraw from about 300 sq miles of territory which they had occupied in the north

⁸ Ulhasnagar on 8 August 1949

⁹ On 26 July 1949

12 I have had the privilege, during the last fortnight, to meet many of the Premiers from the provinces and the states, and we have discussed a number of matters¹⁰ Inevitably, food occupied a prominent place in our discussions Our Food Commissioner, Shri R K Patil, has written to you about the various points that emerged from our discussions, and I should ask you to pay very special attention to his suggestions I am convinced more and more that this food problem is today the keystone for any kind of national recovery or progress If we concentrate on that and make good, other things will inevitably follow while if we drift there then we shall drift everywhere and we shall never be able to get a grip of the situation I would beg of you therefore to pay the greatest attention to food production and to the other matters allied to it

13 A rather dramatic development has taken place in the Jodhpur desert This was the finding of large reservoirs of underground water¹¹ There is no doubt that there is water there, because it is pouring out abundantly It is not clear yet what the quantity of this water is, but, in any event, it is fairly considerable Immediate steps are being taken to have a state farm, probably controlled jointly by the Central Government and the Rajasthan Government, which will extend, to begin with, over 10,000 acres It is probable that water will be found elsewhere also in the Rajputana desert All this will naturally help our food production The soil is good and with water it should immediately produce wheat or any other food crop Perhaps this discovery of underground water in the Rajputana desert will be considered one of the more notable events of our time It will reverse the process, which has been going on for many centuries of the desert spreading more and more Even now this process of desiccation continues on the borders of the United Provinces and elsewhere Historical records tell us that Rajputana was not such a desert area in the past and that it was

10 On 23-24 July 1949

11 Successful exploratory boring was done at Samdhari near Jodhpur

a high road for trade from the great port of Broach in Gujarat to the north. Gradually the desert spread. There is a gap on the western side of this desert from which sands blow in from Kutch and elsewhere and spread gradually. It is proposed to deal with this gap by growing trees there. With the coming of water in the desert itself, slowly but surely this advancing desert will be checked and turned back. Thus we shall register a notable triumph over the destructive aspect of nature.

14 Pakistan has recently issued an ordinance in regard to evacuee property.¹² This ordinance is far reaching and appears to be a breach of their undertakings to us. As a matter of fact, the Pakistan Government even without the ordinance was acting on those lines. The ordinance therefore does not make any very great practical difference. It must be remembered that so far as land and other immovable properties are concerned they remain wherever they are and cannot run away.

15 One other matter of long standing dispute with Pakistan relates to the disposal of canal waters in East and West Punjab. A conference about this is going to be held on the 4th August.¹³

16 We have had a deputation in Delhi of some representatives chiefly belonging to the Socialist Party¹⁴ from French possessions in India.¹⁵ As you know Chandernagore has

12 The ordinance of the 26 July prohibited all transactions involving sale or exchange of evacuee immovable property in West Punjab, N.W.F.P., Baluchistan, Sind and Karachi, the then Federal Capital of Pakistan. Justifying the ordinance, the Pakistan Government stated that while Hindus were selling their property at high prices and migrating to India, the Muslims in India were either forced to sell their property at a lower price or stopped from selling it in anticipation of migrating to Pakistan.

13 The conference held from 4 to 6 August ended inconclusively. While the Indian side insisted on joint survey of the Indus basin, Pakistan insisted on India paying for construction of additional canals in Pakistan and referring the dispute to the International Court at The Hague.

14 The party was formed in Pondicherry to oust the Communists who had been dominating the municipality there.

15 Visited Delhi from 16 July to 2 August 1949.

decided in favour of India Pondicherry and other places will have a referendum probably in December next. The representatives who came to us belong to a party which thus far has not shown any eagerness to join India. But in view of various developments they feel now that it is obviously to their advantage and indeed that it is more or less inevitable that these French possessions should join the Indian Union. For our part we are quite willing to treat these possessions and especially Pondicherry as a distinctive unit with a special cultural background which should be preserved. We are quite agreeable to this unit having some form of autonomy within the Indian Union.

17 Within a few days we shall welcome in New Delhi Dr. Mohammad Hatta, Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic. He will be on his way to the round table conference at The Hague.¹⁶ There are still a great many hurdles in the way of an Indonesian settlement but I have little doubt that some time or other these hurdles will be crossed and Indonesia will come into her own again.

18 As you know there has been a great deal of tension and indeed something worse than tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁷ At the present moment an important conference is being held in Kabul to which many Ambassadors of Afghanistan have gone. It is clear that there is a great deal of resentment and bitterness in Afghanistan over this question. It has often been alleged on the part of Pakistan that we are encouraging Afghanistan. It has been stated that we are pouring money into Afghanistan. All this of course is completely untrue. We want peace at the Frontier. But we also want peace with the goodwill of the people of the Frontier. It is not in our interest to have trouble there.

¹⁶ The conference was held from 23 August to 2 November 1949.

¹⁷ On 29 July Radio Kabul had announced that Afghanistan would recognize Pathanistan the moment it was established.

19 We have refrained from saying much about conditions in the Frontier Province or in the tribal areas, because we did not wish to appear to interfere in what were primarily Pakistan's problems. But it would be absurd to imagine that we are not intensely interested in these problems. What happens in the Frontier is likely to affect us. Apart from this, it has been a matter of deep grief to us that our gallant colleagues in the days of India's struggle for independence should be suppressed and crushed. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, both among the foremost of the leaders who brought independence to us, continue in prison or detention, and large numbers of their colleagues are also in prison. Conditions in the Frontier Province, from all accounts, are bad and there is a great deal of public dissatisfaction. We cannot view this prospect with any satisfaction. It is obvious that the Frontier Province does not enjoy even the limited autonomy that provinces are supposed to have. In the tribal areas, Pakistan has indulged repeatedly in bombing from the air.

20 We stand by the commitments we have made as a consequence of the partition. But events have happened since, and are happening now, which cannot be ignored and it is not surprising that a large number of Pathans, who feel dissatisfied with present conditions, seek to find relief from them.

21 Our Finance Minister, Dr. Matthaï, has recently returned from his visit to London, where he attended the Dominion Finance Ministers' Conference as well as the sterling balances talks. Within a few days he will make public the result of his discussions.¹⁸ There has been some criticism in the press and elsewhere about the decisions arrived at in London. This is

¹⁸ It was announced on 4 August that the Indo-British Sterling Agreement envisaged a release of £81,000,000 to India for 1948-49, which was not provided for in the 1948 agreement. Also, India was required to limit her imports from the dollar area by 25% of the amount she spent in 1948. This limitation was not to apply to imports financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

largely due to ignorance I think you will find when the facts are known that Dr Matthai has achieved substantial results. Indeed the position is more satisfactory in regard to the release of sterling and dollars than we had at one time expected.

22 We may get more sterling but we have to remember always that we are eating up our reserves in this way. We have therefore to be very careful about using our dollars and sterling.

23 I should like to draw your attention to a passage which occurs in the report of General Dodd¹⁹ the Director General of the F A O. He has presented this report after his return from his tour in South East Asia. He spent some time in India also. Referring to fertilizers he says: "The tendency to rely solely upon chemical fertilizers is dangerous in any case it does not build up compost and it is far more expensive particularly in terms of foreign currencies. I am glad this warning has been given by an expert of General Dodd's standing. Personally I have long felt that we are paying more attention to chemical fertilizers than to the local stuff that we should utilize for this purpose. It is true that there is a certain public sentiment against the use of night soil. But we must get over it. Enormous sums of money are being spent by us on buying chemical fertilizers from abroad. Apart from this it is well known now that chemical fertilizers by themselves are bad for the soil. I suggest to you to lay stress on the use of compost. In regard to municipalities compost machines might well be used. These convert night soil etc. into clean cakes which can be used as manure."

24 There has recently been an Industries Conference²⁰ in New Delhi and our Minister for Industries has discussed various

19 Norris Edward Dodd (1879-1968) U.S. Under Secretary of Agriculture 1946-48. Director General Food and Agriculture Organization 1948-54.

20 The Central Advisory Council of Industries met on 28-29 July 1949.

problems with the representatives of the provinces and of capital and labour I should like to make it perfectly clear that there is no question of removing cloth control. There has been a great deal of agitation about this from certain rather interested sources and therefore it is as well to be clear about it ²¹

25 Our future depends upon our production. If our production does not go up, then we cannot make progress. Our production is not likely to go up, unless prices go down and consumption is thus encouraged. How can prices come down? It is not possible to reduce wages. Therefore, the only way is to increase the individual output by methods of rationalisation, etc. At the same time a certain security should be given to labour. At the present moment each group, labour or capital, tends to think of its own interest regardless of this major problem.

26 Reports reach us that the R S S is again resuming some of its activities. We do not mind these activities so long as they are peaceful. But it must always be remembered that the whole mentality of the R S S is a fascist mentality. Therefore their activities have to be very closely watched.

27 We have decided that the celebrations on the 15th August should be on a modest scale ²². We are entirely opposed to any illuminations or feasting. In the circumstances prevailing in the country any large scale celebration would be totally unbecoming.

28 I have sent you separately a brief report²³ by Dr Gyan Chand on the development programmes of a number of provinces which he visited. To this has been added a note by

21 The textile millowners were agitating against cloth control as the provincial governments had failed to lift the accumulated stocks from the mills and this had led to the closure of some mills.

22 The Union Cabinet decided on 1 August to observe Independence Day as a Day of Service.

23 Not printed.

the Bombay Government also. A longer report on provincial programmes by Dr. Gyan Chand is being printed and will be sent to you later. These reports will enable you to keep in touch with what is happening in other provinces.

29 Many of you when visiting Delhi have complained of the frequent conferences which necessitate provincial Ministers coming to Delhi. Nearly all the Governors have also written on this subject and pointed out that the work in the province suffers greatly from this constant stream of Ministers going to Delhi apart from the burden of cost. I think there is a great deal of truth in this and we should try to avoid too frequent conferences. On the other hand these personal contacts and discussions are desirable and help to solve many problems which might not be solved by correspondence alone. Some middle way has to be found and I hope that we shall find it.

30 In a recent bill passed by the Bihar Legislature called the Indian Medical Degrees (Bihar Amendment) Bill reference is made to western and Indian systems of medicine. This presumably refers to what might be called modern medicine and Ayurvedic and Unani systems. In one or two other provinces also this same nomenclature has been used. I should like to point out that this use of the word western and Indian is completely unscientific and indeed factually not correct. What is referred to as western medicine is as much eastern as western and what is referred to as Indian is equally non-Indian. Indeed the very word Unani means Greek. Therefore care should be taken that these unscientific terms are not used in this connection. Instead of western medicine the term might be modern medicine and instead of Indian system of medicine we should refer specifically to the Ayurvedic and Unani systems. An Indian system of medicine must necessarily include every system of medicine that is practised in India including modern and scientific systems.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
15 August 1949

My dear Premier

I am writing this letter on the second anniversary of our independence. On this day more particularly than others our thoughts turn to the record both of achievement and failure in the past and to the problems of today. From the past and the present we try to peep into the future for it is the future that is going to count. It is useful on such occasions to take a broad view of events and forces at work so as to avoid being overwhelmed by the petty problems of the day.

2 There is cause for satisfaction in the solid achievements of the past. There is cause also for distress at some developments that can only be injurious to the nation. I have referred in past letters to these unfortunate tendencies as I have also referred to some of our achievements. Sometimes we are apt to feel distressed at the slowness of achievement and even more so at the lowering in some ways of public morale. This latter phenomenon is present in many countries as a result of the war of economic difficulties and uncertainty and doubt about the future.

3 I look back to a period of about thirty years ago and subsequently and try to sense again the spirit that filled the country then. It was a spirit of confidence in our leader and his mission in ourselves and in the future of our country. We had little in the shape of material goods or strength behind us yet we dared to challenge the might of a proud empire. We succeeded in gaining our independence and today we have far

greater strength and above all the freedom to work out our *destiny*. Why then should we be seized by a malaise and uneasiness? Why should we doubt that future which it is up to us to shape according to our will?

4 We talk about India's lack of many things of capital goods of financial resources etc. and a feeling spreads among many of our people that we must get help from outside sources in order to solve our problems. There is no reason why we should not get this help provided it is on honourable terms which do not infringe in any way on our independence of action. No country can live an isolated existence in the modern world. Yet it is well to remember that the lesson the Father of the Nation taught us was to rely on ourselves and not to look too much to others for help. The strength of a nation comes from within not from outside. It is by relying on ourselves that we achieve success. The problem before us has many facets political economic social etc. But perhaps the most important of it is the psychological aspect. If we look to ourselves and have faith in ourselves and in our destiny all else will follow. If that is lacking then whatever else comes is of little avail.

5 Confidence can come in full measure only if we tread a path which we believe to be right. It is this essential belief in the moral rightness of our cause and of the methods that we employed under Gandhiji's guidance that gave us that strength in the past which brought freedom. So we have to develop afresh or to revive that moral enthusiasm for a great and elemental cause which when it moves the people yields magnificent results. Morality in this context does not mean the petty morality of the bigot or the puritan seeking to interfere with other people's lives. It means rather the larger morality of having a great cause to work for and adhering to honourable methods. It means taking a broader view of this great country and of the world and rising above pettiness of communalism provincialism and faction.

6 Mahatma Gandhi taught us by infinite repetition the lesson of truth and non violence. We may argue as to what truth is and we may discuss the philosophy of non violence and how far it can be applied to our present day imperfect world. But the essentials of that teaching are clear enough and appear to me to become clearer day by day. Even if we made an earnest attempt to adhere to those essentials India and the world would be powerfully affected. Whatever the degree to which non violence can be applied in our external politics it is certain that it is an inevitable necessity for our internal development. Those people, therefore, who encourage violence in India in whatever shape or form or with whatever motive encourage the forces of evil and disruption in this country. Out of that disruption, little good can come.

7 There is a great deal of talk about what is called left unity¹ and one sees a strange assortment of people trying to cooperate together under the slogan of left unity. Leftism is a vague word which may be interpreted in many ways. Nevertheless it has a certain significance and a certain constructive policy. Certainly none of us who have been associated with the great Congress movement in India is afraid of leftism if by this word is meant the fullest political and economic democracy and the good of the masses. But leftism in India at the present moment appears to me little beyond opposition to the Congress. Grown out of a spirit of frustration it is an infantile phenomenon with no positive ideal or policy and is adventurist in outlook. That is unfortunate because it would be a good thing for opposition parties with constructive policies to grow up in India. Without any opposition there is always a tendency towards complacency.

1 Sarat Chandra Bose had convened a meeting of the United Leftist Congress in September to give what he called the final shape to a strong and consolidated leftist movement in the country—an organisation not only to function as a party in opposition but ready to assume power at any moment. The Workers and Peasants Party of Maharashtra and the Mazdoor Trotskyite Party but not the Socialist Party had agreed to join the leftist Congress.

and mental and moral deterioration. Unfortunately however the type of leftism that we see in India appears to be just a collection of odd elements who dislike the Congress or the government and who are prepared to give up every policy which they are supposed to stand for in search of others to line up with them.

8 It may be that the fault lies to some extent at least with the Congress and with the governments in India. As the dominant group both in government and in public life generally it is for the Congress to win the cooperation of as many people as possible. Some they cannot win over because there is a fundamental conflict between them both in regard to policy and methods but the door should be wide open to others.

9 In the domain of foreign affairs the policy we have pursued not without success has been to try to play a distinctive role without lining up with power groups. That policy has been criticised and called ineffective. Others have said that in spite of our declarations circumstances are compelling us to line up with this group or that. I think both these criticisms are unjustified and we have succeeded in a large measure in keeping ourselves free from entanglements and in pursuing the path of our choice. The Commonwealth association has certainly not come in the way of our freedom of action in any way. I think that it has been good for India and for world peace. If any people imagine that that was a cloak for some kind of entanglement they are mistaken. Inevitably our economic and other contacts are greater with some countries than with others. But that is not allowed to influence our major policy.

10 Because of this major policy we have not aligned ourselves with any development like the Atlantic Pact or the Western Union. Because of this also we have not encouraged the idea of a Pacific Pact. As a matter of fact any talk of a Pacific Pact while the Indonesian question as well as the

problem of Indo China remain unsolved, is completely premature.² Who are we to have a pact with the Dutch Government in the *East Indies* or the *Indonesian Republic*? But apart from this, it is our belief that such a pact would, far from ensuring peace, be a direct incentive to conflict

11 We believe that each country should be left to choose its own political or economic structure and to live its own life within the larger framework of international cooperation. Any attempt to interfere is not only unjustified but is bound to lead to trouble. Therefore, we do not seek to interfere in any way, by pact or otherwise, in the revolutionary developments that have taken place in China. It is for the Chinese people to decide what their form of government or economic structure should be and we must accept their decision, whether we like it or not. If we do not seek to interfere with any other country, we are also not prepared to tolerate interference of any other country in our affairs. We shall cooperate with all countries who are prepared to cooperate with us. We shall seek to learn from them what they have to teach but we shall go our own way in conformity with the high principles which we have so often proclaimed and the special needs of India and the genius of the Indian people. We can only pursue that way in foreign affairs if in our own domestic policy and in our internal affairs, we are broadminded and tolerant and devoted to peaceful cooperation.

12 The other major lesson that Mahatmaji taught us was ever to look to the masses and always to consider the good of the people as the primary objective to be aimed at. We encourage no class war and we do not wish to injure any group or class.

² Chiang Kai Shek and President Elpidio Quirino of Philippines announced in Baguio on 11 July that China, Philippines and South Korea had agreed to establish a Far East Anti Communist Pact or the Pacific Anti Communist Union and proposed a South East Asian Conference to discuss its possibility.

But where interests conflict it is inevitable that the interests of the common people must prevail. That is not only good morality but also good commonsense. It is the obvious consequence of democracy. Any other policy would lead to major conflicts and disruption.

13 What is the strength of the Congress today or of the Congress governments and on what is this based? There can be little doubt that in spite of a multitude of critics the Congress and the governments have a firm hold on the minds and hearts of our people. That is partly due to our past achievements and record of service to the country and to the people. In the present analysis it might be said that the stability of the country is based on the confidence and relative well being of the peasantry or the workers. A certain instability comes from the heavy burdens and unemployment of the lower middle classes.

14 In the ultimate analysis even economic conditions are less important than the belief of a people in themselves and in the governing apparatus of a country. If they have that faith in the future they will put up with any distress for the present. Without that faith even petty inconveniences become irritating and disruptive. We have seen this in our own past record and we have seen it and we know about it in other countries passing through periods of revolutionary change. We gain the confidence of the people of India by serving them intimately and remaining in constant touch with the masses. It is by service and such contacts that we shall retain this confidence.

15 It is interesting to remember how some countries have made remarkable progress within a relatively short period of time chiefly because of their faith in themselves and the hard work they put in. This can be considered quite independently of the policy to be pursued. In the early days of the Soviet Union an astonishing development took place at a time of dire

peril and necessity, when no outside help was available. In Japan, where an entirely different policy was pursued, an even more astonishing development took place. Manchuria and Formosa were industrialised within fifteen years or so to an amazing extent by the Japanese. There is hardly a parallel to *this rapid development anywhere*. It is true that Japanese policy was aimed at the imperialist expansion of Japan and not at the good of Manchuria or Formosa. But the fact to be kept in mind is the rapidity of the change when people were determined to bring it about and this change was dependent entirely on the resources of Japan and the country concerned. There was no outside help.

16 *I feel confident that we can solve our economic and other problems, given the will to do so. The food problem has been given the first priority by us because it is the basis of all other problems. It looms large, yet it is essentially a simple problem which can be tackled successfully with speed and ease, provided there is earnestness and efficiency in the administration and an adequate response from our people. Responsibility for this depends not merely on governmental action but on many of our people going to the villages and devoting themselves to the service of the people there.*

17 This morning newspapers brought the news of the counter revolution in Syria and the execution of the President and the Prime Minister.³ This growth of violence in public affairs is a very dangerous symptom and it makes us think more of the vital importance of Gandhiji's teaching.

18 You may have read in the newspapers about a refugee demonstration in front of my house. Some thousands of

³ President Husni az Zaim and Premier Muhsin el Barazi were deposed by a dissident army faction which seized power on 13 August 1949. Zaim was the former Chief of Army Staff who had come to power after deposing President Shakkri al Quwatli in March 1949.

refugees from two of our camps Kurukshetra and Fardabad which is sixteen miles from Delhi marched up and sat in front of my compound I have always made myself available as far as time permitted to see refugees and to help them In fact I have probably given more time to the refugee problem than to any other But this kind of mass invasion though perfectly peaceful was evidently meant to coerce us in some undertakings for the future I was not prepared to be coerced in this way and I made it clear to them that I would not even go to them or discuss the matter with them At the same time I asked the police not to interfere with them so long as there was no misbehaviour For about twelve days this continued It was not very pleasant for me and I do not suppose it was very pleasant for them either Ultimately their patience gave way and they apologised to me and decided to go back to their respective camps

19 The main reason for them to come here was the prospect of free rations being stopped by the end of October We have declared that we shall convert all our camps into work centres and stop free rations by then and we intend to hold by this It is wrong from every point of view to go on giving free rations It is possible however that we may not be able to have adequate arrangements for work for all by then Those who cannot be provided with work will continue in some measure to be our responsibility

20 Meanwhile we are trying our best to provide this work and I would like you to take urgent steps in this matter I am afraid some of our provinces have been rather slow about this and have not cooperated fully It is no good leaving matters to the last date that is October 31st Everything should be planned previously and the change over should be gradual

21 I have been thinking that it would have been a good thing if we had conscripted all able bodied refugees right at the beginning and trained them and employed them in some form

of social service and public works till they found some other gainful employment. I had made some such suggestion some two years ago but it was not accepted then. The idea has come back to me in a modified form. Those who can be provided with work in work centres will remain there. In regard to others who cannot be absorbed in this way at present, I think we might well consider their being brought under some kind of military discipline in case they want support. There is no question of compulsion. But if they want support, they should abide by this discipline and do any work allotted to them and go anywhere that they are sent. This might be done for a year. They will be better off by that training and will fit in later more easily to some work or profession. If they do not want that training and help, then they are free to do what they like. But they cannot expect any help from us then. Unless we try to discipline this refugee population, we shall never solve the problem.

22 In regard to refugee children, I am very anxious that proper arrangements for education should be made. Indeed, I am more anxious about the children than about the grown ups and I must confess sorrowfully that we have not done our duty to these children. Our educational methods are slow, cumbrous and expensive. Apart from this, they seem to train people for a career of unemployment. Obviously they are not suited for these refugee children. The only proper method for them was and is the Sevagram basic school method, that is, the *Nat Talm*.⁴ We have now asked the *Nat Talm* people as well as the

4 A scheme of basic education, started at Wardha in 1937, was designed to develop the basic abilities of the child and therefore gave a primary place to manual training in the child's education. With the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, it was to be free and compulsory and of seven year duration at the school level. It was believed that such education, apart from stimulating the intellect, would be a kind of insurance against unemployment.

Jamia Millia⁵ people who are associated with them to undertake the work of educating the refugee children. It is a very big task which will strain their energies and resources to the utmost. I am glad to say that Shri Aryanayakam⁶ and Ashadevi of the *Nai Talim* as well as Dr Zakir Husain⁷ and others of the Jamia Millia have partly accepted this great responsibility. To begin with they are taking charge of two of our camps and townships, Rajpura and Faridabad. I hope they will extend their activities.

23 In regard to cottage industries which are so important more especially for the refugees I feel that we must entrust the work largely to the All India Village Industries Association⁸ the All India Spinners Association⁹ and allied organisations like the Gandhī Ashram Meerut. This is also being done to some extent. I might add here that in the matter of cottage industries as in many other matters the Japanese have done

5 The Jamia Millia Islamia was one of the premier national institutions started in 1920 by nationalist leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr M A Ansari and Maulana Mahomed Ali in response to Gandhiji's call for boycott of educational institutions run by the government. Started as a school in 1920 in Aligarh, it was later shifted to Delhi and developed into a university under the guidance of Dr Zakir Husain.

6 E W Aryanayakam of Sri Lanka was secretary to Rabindranath Tagore for some time and later joined Mahatma Gandhi to work for the Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Wardha. died in 1967.

7 (1897-1969) Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia 1925-48, took charge of basic national education 1938-48, Vice Chancellor Aligarh Muslim University 1948-56, Governor of Bihar 1957-62, Vice President of India 1962-67, President of India from 1967 till his death.

8 Gandhiji, not feeling satisfied with the progress made in khadi work, set up the All India Village Industries Association in 1934 to revive village industries, to stop the progressive poverty in the villages and save them from complete ruin.

9 An institution founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1925 at Sevagram whose members were required to work exclusively for the constructive programme in which a place of prominence was given to promotion of khadi and cottage industries.

remarkably well. Our Ministry of Rehabilitation sent an officer to Japan and he has returned with a multitude of ideas.

24 At a recent press conference ¹⁰ I made special reference to the Delhi correspondent of the *Blitz*¹¹ and subsequently this correspondent was deprived of permission to function as an accredited correspondent in Delhi. I must say that I have been amazed at the utter irresponsibility of some of our journals and the way they give publicity to the wildest and the most improbable rumours. It is bad enough to have these false and exaggerated statements about our domestic affairs; it is much worse in regard to foreign affairs where they affect our foreign relations. It was because of this that we felt compelled to take this action against the *Blitz* correspondent. I think you will agree with me that we have been singularly tolerant of the stream of abuse and falsehood that flows from some of our journals. We have deliberately not interfered with criticism, even false and malicious criticism. But there is a limit to this, more especially when it affects our relations with other countries.

25 In all that we may undertake, the only sound basis for it is adequate information in the shape of statistics. We are therefore building up a Central Institute of Statistics. Meanwhile, I would specially draw your attention to your government supplying our Education Ministry with educational statistics. There is great delay in sending these with the result that they are of little use. The all India general educational tables for 1944-45 were only published a few months back. Obviously this is not good enough. I am told that the delay is largely due to the slackness of provincial governments in this matter. We are supposed to supply all India statistics to Unesco and if delay occurs, we are criticised unfavourably. Apart from

¹⁰ At a press conference on 5 August, Nehru had described as baseless and fantastic nonsense the report published in *Blitz* of a revolt in Tibet.

¹¹ *Blitz*, an English weekly published from Bombay.

criticism, it affects our own work and we cannot make progress I would, therefore, request you very specially to see to it that these educational statistics are supplied with speed and accuracy to our Education Ministry

26 About food, I would like to emphasise again that this is first priority, and it is the responsibility of your whole government and not only of your Minister of Agriculture I hope you have appointed your Commissioner of Food Production and formed a Cabinet sub committee to guide him

27 The second point to be remembered is that minor irrigation works are to be pushed Most engineers and others like to be connected with major schemes That is understandable, but the fact remains that the small schemes are important and have to be pushed today I suggest that your Public Works Department should definitely concentrate on these small schemes and, if necessary, it can stop the construction of new buildings and roads for the next year or two

28 At the last conference¹² held here on this subject it was noticed that there was a certain lack of coordination between the Food Ministers and the Agriculture Ministers Obviously there must be complete cooperation between the two in each province

29 The fourth point is the development of our organic manurial resources, that is mainly the utilisation of night soil Our intensive cultivation depends largely upon this

30 Fifthly, I should like to stress the importance of linking up production and procurement Our Food Commissioner has written to you about these matters and I am merely repeating what he has told you

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30 Fifthly I should like to stress the importance of linking up production and procurement Our Food Commissioner has written to you about these matters and I am merely repeating what he has told you

31 It would be a good thing if all our schools took a special interest in this food problem—both in production and in avoidance of waste. Also, in some change in food habits. This would have a powerful psychological effect, though the practical results might not be much. This has struck me because some schools wrote to me on the subject. Talk should be given to the children about avoiding waste, etc., and they should be asked to grow something round about the school if possible. This personal work and interest, which no doubt they will carry home with them, will influence large numbers of people.

32. In my last broadcast on food I suggested that every individual should grow some food in the same way as Gandhiji asked everyone to spin. It is possible to grow something in a small pot or a box. I suggest that this idea should be spread. It also has a powerful psychological effect.

33 The Constituent Assembly is carrying on its labours. There has been particular excitement in regard to two or three questions, the language question¹³ and a certain section dealing with compensation for property acquired.¹⁴ I should like to draw your particular attention to the Congress Working Committee's resolution on language.¹⁵ That resolution does not deal with the State language as such, but it deals with the use of our languages for administrative and educational purposes.

13 The controversy revolved round the question of adoption of Hindi as the national language, the use of Devanagiri script, and the retention of English language and its use for purposes of education.

14 See *ante* p. 243.

15 The resolution of 5 August laid down that (1) there be a State language for all India purposes in which the business of the Union would be conducted (2) the language of the State or province be used for purpose of administration as well as university education (3) the mother tongue be the medium of instruction at the primary school level (4) an all India language be studied as a second language at the secondary school level and (5) English be used for fifteen years during the period of transition.

15 August, 1949

The basic principle is that each person should be educated in his own mother tongue as far as possible

34 We have recently had a visit of a distinguished African leader Dr Koinange¹⁶ from East Africa. His visit is important as bringing the question of Africa before our people. Africa is undoubtedly going to play an important part in the future and many people there look to India for help and sympathy. We have made it clear that we do not want any Indian interests in Africa or elsewhere which in any way come in the way of the progress of the people there. We hope to go much further and help in this progress by providing scholarships for the education of their students.

35 The Governor General referred recently in a speech¹⁷ in Bombay to the plight of the middle classes in India. He suggested that many of them will have to think in terms of other occupations than those to which they have been used in the past. That is to say that what have been called the white collar occupations are not enough to absorb the large numbers of our young men and women who come out of our universities. There is an alarming degree of unemployment among these products of our universities who all seem to look forward to some kind of State service or other office work even though that may be far less paid than some forms of manual labour. It is well known that an average worker in a factory or even a porter at a railway station often earns much more than a clerk in an office. Yet in the minds of some there is a mistaken notion that it is degrading to work in the factory or in the farm. There are many causes which have led to the distress of the middle classes and more especially the lower middle class in India. Inevitable changes have taken place for which they are not responsible but which affect them. But this dislike of manual labour is

16 Peter Mbiyu Koinange a prominent leader of the Kenya African Union and also of the East African Trade Unions Congress

17 At a press conference on 10 August 1949

perhaps one minor cause and the sooner we get rid of it the better. In the modern world whether capitalist or socialist the man who can use his hands as a mechanic or technician or engineer or farmer is far more important than the clerk in the office. We have suffered in the past from a semi feudal outlook of looking down on labour and that pursues us still to some extent. Gandhiji attacked this outlook and always laid stress on the dignity of labour. He described himself quite rightly as a worker, a spinner, a weaver and even a sweeper.

36 Our educational system must direct itself to the eradication of this unwholesome outlook. The National Planning Committee¹⁸ some years ago suggested that before a person graduated he must put in a year or so of some kind of manual work or social service. That would take the place of the military service that prevails in countries which have conscription. In the course of that year the young man or woman would be given simple training in drill and discipline and then in disciplined work of any kind which may include the erection of public works or adult literacy campaigns etc. This year of physical labour combined with a disciplined life would be good for the individual and would be good for the community. It would result in a new conception of labour. It should apply to every person whatever his status in life. I think this proposal of the National Planning Committee was a good one and we should try to give effect to it. We may begin in a relatively small way because it will not be easy to organise on a large scale suddenly.

37 I have referred earlier in this letter to the great progress made in Japan previous to the War. Both the Russian example

18 The National Planning Committee was appointed in 1938 by Subhas Chandra Bose, President of the Congress, with Nehru as Chairman and K. T. Shah as Secretary. The work of the Committee was hampered because several Congressmen associated with this work were imprisoned between the years 1940 to 1945. The Committee, however, published a number of reports prepared by its various sub-committees.

and the Japanese so utterly different in their approaches and in the objectives aimed at teach us many lessons of what can be done by a people, if they are disciplined and hard working and can plan. Japan probably has even more to teach us in this respect because Russia gives us a very complicated picture much of which we like and much of which we dislike. In Japan also there was much we disliked. But the lesson to learn is the will to achieve and of achievement without any substantial outside aid. Both these countries built up their social capital through their own efforts. If outside help is available the process is speedier and therefore outside aid should be welcomed. But a reliance on outside aid too much may result in a feeling of helplessness without aid and that is a dangerous and harmful feeling. Therefore we must only think of outside aid as an accessory the main thing being our own effort. That effort must not only be disciplined but also planned or else there is waste. It is this careful planning that both Russia and Japan have to teach us.

38 In our country situated as it is it is inevitable that the State should help in this planning on a large scale even though a great part of our national economy be left to private enterprise. But the State can only help people who help themselves and who bring a certain enthusiasm to the task. They must have a feeling that they are building something that is permanent that in fact they are the builders of the new India. If that feeling pervades them then all work becomes a pleasure bringing a certain satisfaction and all inconveniences are of little account.

39 As you know I believe in our taking the best out of the West. I do not believe in a narrow nationalism and I think that India came down in the scale of nations in the past because of her narrowness in outlook and because of many evil customs that developed and fed this narrowness and exclusiveness. Nevertheless I am quite clear in my mind that we shall not make real progress by trying to copy western methods and ways

of life. We shall have to hold to our anchor and build on our own foundations. Those foundations were well and truly laid by Gandhiji.

40 Today the anniversary of independence was celebrated simply and solemnly in Delhi. No doubt such celebrations took place all over India also. Here in Delhi we went in the early morning to pay our homage to the beloved leader and Father of our Nation whose memory has become such a vital part of ourselves. Then followed a ceremony at the Red Fort where the flag of India was unfurled before a mighty gathering of about half a million persons. It was a noble sight which filled one with deep joy and faith. The troubles of the moment seemed to pass away and the road to progress for our people seemed to lie clear ahead.

41 Sometimes many of us may feel a little tired and a little down hearted because of these troubles and difficulties that pursue us and because of our own failings and little mindedness and lack of faith and there may be even a tendency to escape from this hard labour which does not always appear to bear fruit. Yet there is no escape and there must be no escape for we are committed and pledged and dedicated to a cause and there is no happiness except in working for that cause. Also good work and honest work must necessarily bear fruit. Of that I am convinced.

41 Today on this anniversary I feel full of confidence for the future and I want to share this confidence with you. As I write this I look at a picture of Gandhiji and a multitude of ideas come to my mind. I think of the great brotherhood he built up in this country and his infinite labour in training our people. That great work has borne substantial fruit already. But it will yield even greater fruit in the future and so I send you greetings and promise of hard work and successful work in this year to come. It matters little what happens to us. It

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matters a great deal what happens to India and to the people of India. May we serve them to the utmost of our ability in this year to come.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
2 September 1949

My dear Premier

Time and the world are ever in flight *and we try vainly to keep up with them. Events follow each other relentlessly and problem piles upon problem. Sometimes one feels a little disappointed at being the slave to a large extent of events and external occurrences which should easily be controlled at other times one has a certain feeling of excitement and exhilaration at having to wrestle with difficulties and in trying to overcome them with more or less success. Much depends upon the temperament of the individual or the mood of the moment. Great difficulties and perils often draw out an individual and a nation and the very hour of peril becomes the moment of victory. Smaller difficulties and obstructions usually embarrass much more and even produce occasionally a sense of frustration. It is not perhaps the problem or the difficulty that counts so much as the mental approach to it. There are occasions when a whole nation rises to heights of endeavour and performs miracles. There are also occasions when a spirit of lassitude creeps over one and paralyses mental and physical activity. We have had a long history and uncounted centuries lie behind us having shaped us for what we are. During this vast period we have had experience of all these various moods of elation and depression of high and brave endeavour and of static passivity or something even worse. Even during our lifetime we have experienced all this. When perils have confronted us we have faced them with courage and then we have relapsed and allowed events to take their course often a wrong course. What fate and determinism may have to do with

* From *Into the Twilight* by W B Yeats

human destiny is a matter for philosophers to argue. But men and women who have ideals and objectives before them and the urge to achieve them do not wait for the turn of fortune's wheel. Nor do they seek anchorage in some kind of security which eludes them as in a rapidly changing world it must. They try to be to the best of their ability moulders of destiny and not the pitiful object of an unkind fate.

2 I am driven to these observations as I sit down to write this fortnightly letter to you and survey both the Indian scene and the world scene. What a mess the world is in and India and yet everywhere one sees bright points of light men and women of integrity and purpose and strength of will who are out to achieve some great purpose. To a casual onlooker the widespread dark patches might seem overwhelming and yet it is those spots of light that count and each one of us can add to the gloom or to the light. Unhappily most of us spend our time and our energy in looking at others and criticising them instead of tending our own little light. It is so easy to emphasize the evil that surrounds us but in the very act of doing so we add to it. We cannot and must not ignore it for that would be folly. But while recognising it we have to feel strong enough to overcome it. That can only be so if we hold to some basic ideals and objectives and have faith in them. Any task that is big enough takes a lot of doing anything that is worthwhile must be achieved by great effort otherwise it is trivial and of little moment.

3 In the world today many things are happening and changes and upheavals come daily. In China the Communist armies march rapidly towards Canton the great city of the south and it appears that there is nothing to stop them effectively. Probably in a reasonably short time some kind of a central government will be established by the Chinese Communists and this will control a very great part of China. Hong Kong is likely to continue as a British outpost at least for the present. The island of Formosa also will remain outside the Chinese Communists domain. There may also be other pockets

in the interior At The Hague the round table conference to decide the fate of Indonesia is being held On the whole the progress made has not been unsatisfactory though difficulties crop up at every stage and there are many hurdles to be crossed At Strasbourg a European Assembly has met slowly groping its way towards some kind of a European confederation¹ The tension between Russia and Yugoslavia has grown, and people have even talked of a conflict that is more than verbal² In Burma the government forces slowly make progress We have just had the visit of the Burmese Foreign Minister³ to Delhi on his way back from Europe and America⁴

4 In India the new Constitution is bravely trying to keep up its head in an ocean of words and speeches All our time tables are upset by this flow of eloquence and debate and no one quite knows how long this session of the Constituent Assembly will last At present it is hoped to finish it by the 22nd September, by which time the second reading should be over The third reading will have to take place probably in November In any event the new Republic of India must begin its fateful career on the 26th of January next

5 In the Constituent Assembly a great deal of excitement has been caused over the language issue Perhaps by the time you

get this letter, some decision will have been arrived at. In this and other matters, it is the approach that counts. Are we dealing with our problems with vision, broadmindedness and tolerance, and keeping in view the varied aspects and culture of India? Or are we swept away by rather narrow nationalistic or provincial or communal considerations? Our present difficulties will pass, but if we start our new career in a narrow cage of thought and feeling, our growth will be restricted.

6 There have been talks on what is called leftist unity. They have apparently not succeeded. Any healthy development of what might be called *leftism* or a *responsible opposition* should, I think, be welcomed. It will be good for the country and it will keep all of us up to the mark. But, unfortunately, what is called leftism is often enough some kind of a mixture of vague theory or adventurism or the opportunism of the moment. It does not seem to be inspired by the great ideals which have moved masses or taken the individual to the stake. It thinks in terms of elections and of opportunist combinations of ill assorted people for the sake of winning an election. Very odd combinations are often to be seen. We have noticed people who are or ought to be completely opposed to one another joining up in opposition to the Congress. Whatever the faults and failings of the Congress and there are many, it still holds the field in India and will continue to hold because it has some virtues also. Any leftism that is based on opposition and adventurism may succeed here and there for the moment, but will otherwise make little difference to the main current of events. Leftism is not just something in the air, but something which is both based on ideals and on reality.

7 There is a spate of criticism of the Congress in which Congressmen have joined with vigour. We are peculiarly liable to self criticism, and I think that is not a bad trait within limitations. We are also sometimes peculiarly liable to faction, and that can seldom be good. How can we preserve the proper balance of criticism and self criticism on the one hand, and of a

in the interior. At The Hague the round table conference to decide the fate of Indonesia, is being held. On the whole, the progress made has not been unsatisfactory though difficulties crop up at every stage and there are many hurdles to be crossed. At Strasbourg a European Assembly has met, slowly groping its way towards some kind of a European confederation.¹ The tension between Russia and Yugoslavia has grown, and people have even talked of a conflict that is more than verbal.² In Burma, the government forces slowly make progress. We have just had the visit of the Burmese Foreign Minister³ to Delhi on his way back from Europe and America.⁴

4 In India the new Constitution is bravely trying to keep up its head in an ocean of words and speeches. All our time tables are upset by this flow of eloquence and debate and no one quite knows how long this session of the Constituent Assembly will last. At present, it is hoped to finish it by the 22nd September, by which time the second reading should be over. The third reading will have to take place probably in November. In any event, the new Republic of India must begin its fateful career on the 26th of January next.

5 In the Constituent Assembly a great deal of excitement has been caused over the language issue. Perhaps by the time you

1 The Council of Europe formally came into existence on 3 August 1949 and its first session was inaugurated at Strasbourg on 10 August.

2 The Soviet Government on 11 August denied the Yugoslav charge of 3 August that they had been resisting Yugoslavia's territorial claims to Slovenia and Carinthia and instead accused Yugoslav of backstairs negotiations with Britain. Thereafter both countries accused each other of persecuting their countrymen who had been arrested on some charges. Finally on 2 September the Yugoslav Government cancelled their agreement with the Soviet Union for joint ventures in the fields of civil aviation and river navigation.

3 U E Maung (b 1898) Advocate General of Burma 1945. Prosecutor at International Military Tribunal Tokyo 1946. Judge of the Supreme Court and Chief Justice 1948-49. Foreign Minister March-December 1949. Election Commissioner 1951.

4 On 1 September 1949.

utilise this opportunity not only for growing more food but for turning our education in a new direction where the work in the class room and laboratory is married to practical experience in the fields. Whether that produces immediate results in food production or not I do not know. But it will certainly produce marked results in the boys and girls. Boys and girls in rural schools can do this with ease and advantage. But even city students can do their bit.

10 I suggest that every school and college should set aside some time for the consideration of this food problem including food habits. In this way we can effectively change some of our food habits which have not been good. We all know that under stress of wartime emergency in England the habits of the people were changed for the better in spite of food scarcity.

11 We have to retrench and save money in many ways. This is desirable also from the point of view of applying that money or personnel and material for work in connection with the Grow More Food Campaign. Thus the Government of the U P have retrenched a large sum of money from the building programme releasing thereby material and personnel for minor irrigation works. Subsidiary foods like sweet potatoes etc have to be encouraged and made a part of rationing.

12 I have mentioned above that education might be given a new bent through our Grow More Food Campaign. The whole question of university education has recently been considered by the Universities Commission of which Dr Radhakrishnan was Chairman. The report will soon be out and I would invite your attention to it. This Commission was composed of very eminent educationists from India, the United States and England. They have done a remarkably good piece of work in a short time. The Chairman gave some idea of their recommendations in a press conference. They have pointed out the evils of tying up our examination system with government appointments. These examinations of ours and the education that lies behind

true appreciation of happenings on the other? Merely negative criticism will do little good and irresponsible condemnation can only develop irresponsibility further. No great work can be done in an atmosphere of irresponsibility.

8 The economic situation in India is obviously a difficult one. There is financial stringency and we have to be very careful as to how we spend public money. It is even more important that we should frame policies which cut at the root of our present economic evils. We have to be vigilant and there is no doubt that governmental machines tend to be wasteful, slow moving and inefficient. At the same time it seems to me factually wrong and psychologically still more wrong to cry loudly about our parlous state. It is not in a parlous condition. Let us be clear about this in spite of all our difficulties. We have got into a tangle where money unfortunately, and those who control money, can make a difference to our lives. But money, however useful in the modern world, is not of ultimate importance. It is the men and women who create money and the necessities of life that are of importance. We shall get over the troubles caused by money or the lack of money if we think a little more of the things that count in life.

9 Our Grow More Food Campaign is gathering weight. I need not repeat to you what I have said previously except to remind you that this is our main battle-front today. We have plenty of projects and schemes. But behind all those there must be a crusading enthusiasm in the public mind. I suggest that our young men and women and boys and girls in colleges and schools should take this up. They can do so in many ways. Batches of them can go to the villages to help in various kinds of labour and in doing so educate themselves and come into intimate contact with the people who are the backbone of our nation. They can help in making compost which is so essential for us. Our food production branch of the Ministry of Agriculture will gladly supply to schools and universities necessary literature for this purpose. I think that we should

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them are looked upon just as stepping stones to employment by government. Nothing could be worse for education. Our universities turn out tens of thousands of graduates who do not know what to do and appear to be incapable of doing anything except in some office. Our education has been described perhaps a little uncharitably as a training for unemployment. That may be an exaggeration. But there is a great deal of truth in it. So it is suggested that university examinations should be completely divorced from official appointments for which there should be separate tests.

13 *One other matter to which I attach great importance and about which I think I have previously written to you is the necessity of some kind of manual labour for each student. I think it should be a good thing if every graduate before he got his degree was expected to put in a full year's labour in a factory or field or some other place. It might be some kind of social work. This is not a novel idea as something like this has been tried with success in other countries. Many countries go in for conscription for military service. Why should we not have conscription for social service and labour? That would include of course some kind of elementary military training without arms. That discipline is badly needed in this country.*

14 I presume you have seen the resolutions passed by the provincial Education Ministers' Conference which was held recently in Delhi, more particularly the resolution on the use of the mother tongue in the junior basic classes.⁵ This resolution taken together with the Congress Working Committee's resolution on language lays down an effective language policy for our schools and colleges. If these directions are followed

5 The conference held on 19-20 August resolved that the medium of instruction in schools both at the primary and secondary levels should be the mother tongue. In bilingual areas it suggested setting up of separate schools for those whose mother tongue was neither the language of the province nor the State language.

closely many of the inter provincial conflicts in bilingual areas will disappear

15 I should also like to draw your attention to a recent conference held in Delhi at the instance of our Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad ⁶ to promote cultural cooperation among Asian nations ⁷ This is a good beginning and India is eminently suited for this task

16 There has been a great deal of talk of depression in the economic field In the United States of America it is called by the politer word recession There is undoubtedly an economic and financial upset in many parts of the world partly due to post war conditions partly to our adhering to systems which are out of place in the modern world While there is this difficulty here in India also we must remember that we cannot get over it by patch work efforts More basic remedies have to be sought In any event this is just the time when we must encourage all productive effort in industry Big scale industry requires a lot of money and time We may not have enough money for these ambitious schemes But it is always possible to start a large number of small scale and cottage industries which add to the wealth of the nation and give employment to many people We cannot afford to have or to encourage anything that leads to unemployment during these days of high prices Any economy that leads to a lowering of production is bad economy Ministers of Industries therefore should work with something of the tremendous energy which the Chancellor of the Exchequer in England Sir Stafford Cripps ⁸ has shown in

6 (1888 1958) Scholar and nationalist who served long terms in prison President of the Congress 1923 and 1940 46 Minister for Education 1947 58

7 On 21 August 1949

8 (1889 1952) Prominent member of the British Labour Party visited India 1939 British Ambassador in Moscow 1940 42 member War Cabinet and deputed by it to India 1942 Minister of Aircraft Production 1942 45 President of the Board of Trade 1945 47 member of the Cabinet Mission to India 1946 Chancellor of the Exchequer 1947 50

dealing with England's economic difficulties. We have to produce both for consumption and for export and I have no doubt that we can increase our production greatly and soon if we think more of the smaller schemes and a little less of the very big ones.

17 Having dealt with a variety of problems I now come to an issue of grave importance for us which is filling my mind as I write this letter. This is the Kashmir issue. You know that it was proposed to hold a conference of representatives of India and Pakistan at ministerial level to consider truce terms in Kashmir.⁹ At the last moment the U.N. Commission stopped this conference by calling it off.¹⁰ This came as a great surprise to us. It is true that there was not very much hope of arriving at an agreement but one does not give up striving because of the difficulty of the task. What distressed us most was the reason for and the manner in which this conference was called off by the U.N. Commission. They called it off because there was no agreement on the agenda because Pakistan refused even to discuss some of the vital points in dispute.¹¹ In other words Pakistan repeated its old practice of exercising a veto and the Commission tamely agreed to it.

18 Now the Commission has proposed arbitration in regard to the truce.¹² It is not usual to have arbitration on political

9 The Commission proposed to both the Dominions on 9 August to hold a meeting at ministerial level from 22 August to discuss the truce terms.

10 On 18 August Dr Oldrich Chyle, Chairman of the Commission, announced the cancellation of the meeting because they felt that on comparing the responses of the two governments and keeping in mind the background of the question, the meeting would not have led to any positive result.

11 On 12 August India informed the Commission that the question of withdrawal and disbandment of Azad Kashmir forces should be part of the agenda.

12 On 29-30 August the Commission asked both Governments if they would agree to arbitration by Admiral Nimitz on the differences existing between them concerning all questions raised by them in the implementation of Part II of the Resolution of 13 August 1948 and treating his decisions as binding on both.

issues of this type and the United Nations have never suggested this previously although they have been connected with many international disputes and conflicts. Nevertheless there is no reason why we should rule out arbitration. But the manner of suggesting it is extraordinary. No terms of reference even have been mentioned and the Commission appears to want to forget everything that has happened in the course of the last twenty months or so including its own labours. I have also received messages from President Truman of the United States of America and from Prime Minister Attlee of the United Kingdom urging us to accept this proposed arbitration.¹³ I confess that I have been somewhat distressed by this approach of these two eminent persons. Obviously this is a matter of great importance for us requiring the most careful thought. We are going to give that thought to it and before we formulate our answer we shall consult all those who are intimately concerned. At my request Sheikh Abdullah the Prime Minister of Kashmir has come here and I intend going to Bombay soon to consult our Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel.

19 Reports continue to come to us of feverish preparations in Pakistan for war. Large purchases of arms and equipment have been made in foreign countries and we are told that the whole atmosphere in Western Pakistan is a fatalistic one expecting and preparing for war. So far as we are concerned we are determined not to take any step that leads to war. In spite of the fact that Pakistan was the aggressor in Kashmir we want to settle this problem peacefully. We shall not be aggressors in any event. But in view of all these war preparations of Pakistan we have naturally to be on the alert for any development. Meanwhile tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan has grown and in either country there is continuous and violent propaganda against the other.

20 The recent ordinances in regard to evacuee property have created some sensation. The Pakistan Government has for long been riding roughshod over the rights of its non-Muslim citizens. The ordinance passed by us was a natural consequence of the steps taken by Pakistan. In applying it, great care has to be taken to avoid injustice. For us, every citizen of India, Hindu, Muslim or other, must have the same rights and privileges. Cases have been brought to my notice when action was taken without sufficient justification or enquiry. I would request you therefore to impress upon all custodians of evacuee property and others who deal with this matter that the greatest care must be exercised. There are many difficult cases, because families have been split up by partition and there is joint ownership of property. However that may be, it is important that we should proceed cautiously. It is better to allow a few evil-doers to escape than to tarnish our reputation or to give cause to people to say that we are not treating some Muslims with absolute fairness.

21 In a little more than a month, I shall be leaving India to go to the United States and I shall be away for about five weeks. This visit of mine is being made much of in the United States and a heavy programme has been made for me. It is a difficult time for me to leave India. Nevertheless, I hope that the visit will bear some fruit.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
16 September 1949

My dear Premier

The last fortnight has been a very busy one for me and for many others in Delhi. The Constituent Assembly has been in session all the time, often dealing with matters which raised a great deal of controversy and argument. There have been prolonged and heated debates and yet ultimately some way that we generally accepted was found. One of the matters which was debated both in the House and outside the longest was the language issue. There was strong feeling over this matter and repeated attempts at some kind of a compromise failed. Yet ultimately the resolution was passed almost unanimously.¹ This was significant of the way we work, of both our weaknesses and our strength. We debated interminably and often with some heat when we might have come to a reasonable solution by agreement much earlier. But the fact remains that we were wise enough to come to an agreement in spite of strong feelings in the matter on both sides. This language resolution has to be taken seriously and at the same time we must proceed with as large a measure of cooperation of the different parts of India as possible so that there may be no element of coercion or ill feeling. As I said in the Assembly we have begun a linguistic revolution of the first magnitude. This does not mean of course that English will fade away. The English language has become too important an element in India's public life and in the world to be ignored.

¹ On 14 September 1949

2 The Constituent Assembly has already lasted about two years and nine months. When it first came into existence, I estimated that it would finish its labours within eight or nine months. Subsequent happenings have shown how wrong I was. At any rate now, we seem at last to be somewhere near the end. Yet it has not been possible to finish the second reading during the current session. We shall break up soon and meet again early in October to complete the second reading. We then meet in November for the final and third reading. That is the programme. We are determined to inaugurate the new Republic on the 26th January, a fateful day in India's history.

3 The Kashmir issue has given us a great deal of trouble during the past fortnight. You must have seen in the newspapers the communication addressed to us by the U.N. Commission proposing arbitration on the truce proposals. We are not and we cannot be opposed to arbitration in principle over any matter of dispute.² But the manner this proposal was put forward to us was not only not in conformity with the assurances given to us by the Commission previously but was practically an encouragement of the aggressor. We have been unable to accept this proposal, though we have made it clear that we do not believe in deciding any issue by the sword and we are always prepared for peaceful settlement of the entire issue by arbitration or otherwise. But any such approach must bear all the facts in mind and all the assurances given to us and the commitments made. Also the security of Kashmir must be assured. Presumably the Commission will now go to Geneva to write their report and will later present it to the Security Council of the United Nations.

2 On 8 September the Commission was informed that India would like points for arbitration to be spelled out and a specific assurance on disbandment of "Azad Kashmir Forces" be given as India could ill afford to see the repetition of the horrors of invasion and if the forces were not disbanded "one of the essential conditions for holding a free and impartial plebiscite will not be satisfied."

4 Kashmir is one of our main causes of friction with Pakistan. This trouble has been none of our seeking. Kashmir was attacked and invaded and we went to its rescue. We cannot prove false to our duty and to the trust reposed in us. Another major question is that of evacuee property. A third one relates to river and canal waters. In regard to both these questions we are prepared to settle them by any peaceful method including proper arbitration.

5 There has been considerable deterioration in regard to the evacuee property question. Pakistan has seized hold of a great deal of non-Muslim property. What it previously did rather informally it now does under cover of law. This has naturally produced its reactions in India. Here also additional steps have been taken to prevent any misuse of property by evacuees. An ordinance was issued both at the Centre and in the provinces.³ This ordinance was rather vaguely and loosely worded and we have received a number of complaints about its application. The matter is under consideration.

6 Meanwhile I should like to make it perfectly clear that we are not out to follow the methods and practice of Pakistan in this or any other matter. We must proceed with the greatest care not to do any injustice to any individual. I have found that some custodians have been over-enthusiastic or have interpreted the instructions sent by us in a manner that has led to injustice. Strict orders have been issued now that this must not be done. In fact for the time being all sealing of shops and other property has been stopped till further instructions are issued. I shall be grateful to you if you will impress upon all custodians in your province to act in a strictly judicial manner and when in doubt always to give the benefit of doubt to the person concerned. We must remember that in northern India especially large numbers of Muslim families have been split up by the partition. Because a relative is in Pakistan it does not

necessarily follow that the party remaining in India has to be treated as an alien. He must have his full rights of Indian citizenship respected until something is definitely proved against him. There has been a tendency to proceed on vague information or on insufficient data. This must be checked. Otherwise alarm seizes large numbers of people who do not know when action might be taken against them. As a matter of fact most of those who have really sinned in this respect have got away with their property. The smaller fry remain. We must not deal with these petty folk harshly. It would be most unfortunate if any impression got abroad that we were treating some of our fellow citizens unjustly. The reputation of India is more important than action taken in some petty matter.

7 In Pakistan there has been much shouting about a boycott of Indian cloth and generally the tone of speeches and newspaper articles has been aggressive rather vulgar and full of threats.¹ It is unfortunate that a neighbour country of ours should behave in this way. It displays not only a certain immaturity but what is worse a pathological condition of the mind. We must not allow ourselves to react in a like manner. That would bring us down to the same low level. We have certain objectives and a certain high responsibility which we dare not forget.

8 The economic situation in India as in many other countries is a cause of uneasiness. Basically it is admitted all round that India is sound. But certain events and a certain lack of patriotic outlook among some of our countrymen have led to the present position. We shall get over these difficulties. I have little doubt. But the way is going to be a hard one and it might possibly take some time. If necessary and it may well be

necessary we may have to think of non traditional ways of dealing with an abnormal situation. Traditional ways are good in their way but are slow and totally unsuited sometimes to the rapid march of events. The Government of India is trying its utmost to avoid any expenditure that is not considered absolutely essential. We have summoned back much to my regret some of our representatives abroad. Economy is essential. But two facts have to be borne in mind. We have to avoid large scale suffering and we must see that this economy does not come in the way of future development. The time has come when we must look at this picture of India as a whole and decide on some kind of a regulated plan of action. In a way there has been a spate of planning in India during the last few years and all our drawers and pigeonholes are full of projects and schemes and the like. But all this can hardly be called planning in the real sense of the word. For planning means an approach to the question on a national basis. It means a definite objective to be aimed at and not sporadic efforts at improvement here and there. This is a vast question and will require a good deal of thinking and working out. But our approach to it should be clear. Also we can never forget the human and social factor. A modern government cannot allow people to starve or to suffer in other ways without making every effort to help them.

9. Looked at from any point of view the food problem becomes the principal one. If we cannot solve it adequately then a multitude of other difficulties pursue us. If however we can control the food situation then we can also control other situations. I think that there is some realisation of this in the country and a definite attempt is being made at all levels to avoid waste to produce more food and to some extent change our food habits. There is this public responsibility and I have had many evidences of this even from children in schools. The latest is that the textile labour association of Ahmedabad has decided not to take any rice ration. This by itself saves 5 000 maunds of rice every month. In Delhi 1 000 bags of rice were

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⁴ For example on 15 September M. A. Gurmiani described Kashmir as "an article of faith" and "not merely a piece of land or a source of rivers." He added "We are fighting for Kashmir on the same principle as that on which we fought for Pakistan. As long as the 32 00 000 of our brethren in Kashmir are denied this right Pakistan will remain incomplete."

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saved in a week by a little effort. If this kind of thing is followed up all over the country then we do not have to wait till 1951. The food problem will be solved long before that.

10 There is one way of avoidance of waste which must be attended to. In most cities and other rationed areas rations are often issued to non-existent people. Wherever there has been a check up this has been found and a considerable saving effected. I see in the newspapers that in Lucknow city 48 000 of such ghost rations were being issued. By stopping this 1 970 maunds of rice and 3 940 maunds of coarse grain have been saved. I would suggest to you therefore that there should be these checks of rationed areas and the rules should be strictly enforced.

11 While I am sure there is a much wider realization of the food situation and efforts are being made all over the country to improve it I still think that the mentality of a war time effort is lacking both among many of our officers and the people. We have to produce this mentality. In particular district officers must assume full responsibility for all work connected with food in their districts. That should be their first concern and they must be told that they would be judged by results and not by long reports. As a matter of fact our Food Commissioner tells me that even these reports do not come and sometimes there are delays in replies from provinces. That means that people have not imbibed the war time spirit sufficiently.

12 In regard to subsidiary foods it must be realised that unless they are linked up with rationing with a view to reduce import of grain they will serve little purpose. Provinces should consider this matter and forge this link in consultation with our Ministry of Food.

13 I think I mentioned to you in one of my letters the success of Shri Ganga Saran a kisan of Meerut in the U P. He has shown remarkable results in increasing the output of various

16 In regard to jute Pakistan appears to be trying to create some kind of a monopoly in East Bengal. They charge us very high prices for the raw jute. With these prices of the raw material the finished products become very expensive. It is necessary therefore for each province to increase its production of jute.

17 As you perhaps know an eminent American engineer Dr. Trone who has spent many years in Russia, China, Japan and other places has been in India at our invitation to advise us generally about planning and development. He has been here only a month thus far and he will give us a full report later. Already however he has drawn my attention to certain matters. Government departments work in more or less water-tight compartments without organic unity of purpose. There is this lack of unity of purpose also as between different provinces. Thus the activities of closely allied departments like agriculture, irrigation, forestry and cooperatives have to be interrelated for quick and effective results even in the Grow More Food Campaign. Another matter to which he has drawn my attention is the divorce often of responsibility from authority. It is seldom that any individual is responsible for any task. Responsibility is spread out over committees and a number of departments and hence there is not only great delay through red-tapism etc. but a loss of efficiency. Our governmental structure was built up by the British for their own special purposes and it had little relation to economic activities of the nation. In the main it was concerned with keeping the peace and collecting taxes. We are trying to use the same structure for economic activities of all kinds for which it is not suited. Whenever a government has taken over charge of economic activities it has been compelled by circumstances to devise new machinery which unites responsibility and authority. A well-known instance of this is that of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the U.S. This is a large question and a most important one which we shall have to consider very carefully. I should like you to give thought to it.

18 Our housing factory near Delhi will soon begin to produce prefabricated houses. We have also entered into an arrangement with a British firm⁶ to erect prefabricated houses of a different type. I have seen models of those houses and they are very good and very substantial as well as attractive. On the whole they are cheaper than traditional methods of building and obviously they are faster. I have little doubt in my mind that we shall have to go in for prefabricated houses on a large scale if we are to meet the housing shortage. These houses must be built very largely with such material as may be locally available. This will not do away with the traditional methods of building. There is plenty of scope for both.

19 The Indonesian round table conference at The Hague is proceeding rather slowly. It is difficult to say whether it is moving towards success or a deadlock. On the whole indications point to some measure of success.

20 In China the Communist armies are marching rapidly towards Canton and there can be little doubt that they will reach there before very long. Probably by the 10th October which is a special date in Chinese history and is called the double tenth a new Central Government might be proclaimed in China.⁷ The question of recognition of the new regime will then have to be considered.⁸ We are in no way opposed to such recognition. But we shall have to wait and watch developments before we take any such step. Meanwhile the position of our Ambassador as well as other Ambassadors is becoming more and more difficult. It is possible that the new government might move from Nanking to Peiping. We may have to recall our Ambassador for consultations if the situation so demands. In any event our consular staff will remain there.

6 M S Reema Construction Limited Salisbury

7 In fact it was proclaimed on 1 October 1949

8 India recognised the new regime in China on 30 December 1949

21 There has been a great deal of bitter criticism in the Chinese Communist press about India's interest in Tibet. Of course we are interested as Tibet is our neighbour. But we have no intention of interfering in any way. Much of this criticism in China has been caused by an article that appeared in *Blitz* some time back in which some fantastic allegations were made. You may remember that we had to take some action against the correspondent of *Blitz* in Delhi⁹ who was responsible for this article. I have been criticised in many newspapers for this action. I had not wanted to enter into a controversy or to give all facts to the public. We had repeatedly warned that correspondent previously and yet he persisted in his fanciful stories. His last effort had led to a great deal of misunderstanding and trouble for us.

22 I must say that it distresses me to see how irresponsible some of the newspaper comments are. It does not matter very much if those comments deal with the domestic situation but it does matter when they touch upon international issues. The comments of some newspapers in regard to Kashmir have also been wholly irresponsible and harmful.

23 Our delegation for the next meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations has departed. It is a smaller delegation than usual because of the need for dollar economy. Indeed we are cutting down all our delegations and often stopping them because of this. There are several important subjects before the General Assembly in which we are interested. There is the question of Italian colonies of South West Africa where the South African Government has deliberately flouted the United Nations and there may be the question of Indians in South Africa. In spite of our efforts to hold a round table conference over this issue we have not gone far yet because of the delays of the South African

9 See ante p 440

Government We may thus have to place the matter again before the General Assembly

21 As you know I shall be going to the United States early in October and I am not likely to be back till the second week of November Newspapers both in India and abroad attach deep significance to my visit No doubt there is a certain significance to it because of many reasons But those who imagine that I am going to discuss a Pacific Pact or something like it are mistaken Naturally occasions may arise for me to discuss a number of problems and more particularly the question of loans for our development schemes

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
2 October, 1949
Gandhi Jayanti

My dear Premier

This will be my last letter to you for six weeks or so. In another five days I shall be leaving India and after a brief halt in London, I shall proceed to the United States of America. This proposed tour of mine has already attracted a great deal of attention there. A heavy programme has been drawn up for me and yet I have had to reject innumerable engagements which otherwise I should have liked to accept.

2 I am going away from India at a time of peculiar stress and difficulty. I could hardly have chosen a more unsuitable time for such a visit abroad. Nevertheless, I have decided to adhere to my promise and programme, as a postponement of it at this stage would have created great difficulties and might have been construed almost as an act of discourtesy to the United States. So I am going, though I would very much like to remain here and to share with my colleagues the burden of the day. It is possible however that my visit to the United States might bear fruit. I have already told you in my letters that rumours and talk about certain political issues, like the Pacific Pact, etc., being discussed by me in the United States are without foundation.¹ I am going to the United States in all friendliness and I am sure I shall get friendliness in return. Our foreign

1 On 15 September the representatives of Australia and New Zealand informed an unofficial Commonwealth Relations Conference that they would welcome a Pacific Pact with the United States as senior partner. There was speculation in the Indian press that Nehru would discuss this issue in the United States.

policy remains what we have so often declared it to be and it will be my privilege to say so if occasion arises, in the United States. We shall be glad if on the economic plane we get help from America. That does not mean that we are going as beggars to the U.S. or to any other country. It is better to starve than to beg and become dependent upon others. We want food, we want machinery and other capital goods. We do not ask for them as free gifts. We should like to have them on some deferred payment system on terms of mutual advantage. If it is to India's advantage to have food and machinery from the U.S., it is equally to the United States' advantage to help India in this way. The U.S.A. cannot maintain its position, in spite of the gold and dollars it has, unless it trades with the rest of the world and unless standards go up in the undeveloped countries. So it is a question of enlightened self interest on both sides. India has much to give, not in gold or silver or even in exportable commodities, but by virtue of her present position. It is well recognised today all over the world that the future of Asia will be powerfully determined by the future of India. India becomes more and more the pivot of Asia.

3 I have referred above to the economic situation. This has been giving us a lot of trouble which has increased because of devaluation, which has brought a large number of problems in its train.² Pakistan's refusal to devalue her rupee in terms of the dollar has added further complications and, for the present, all trade between India and Pakistan is at a standstill. Our food problem is affected, our import of machinery is affected, and indeed many of our development schemes to which we attach value have been affected by this devaluation. We have to exercise the strictest economy in all our expenditure and, in particular, in regard to dollars.

2 On 19 September, India devalued its rupee against the dollar as a sequel to the devaluation of the pound on 18 September, and the decision of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and Sri Lanka to follow suit. As a result, the value of the rupee was 21 U.S. cents compared to 30.225 cents earlier.

4 Parliament will meet soon to discuss this devaluation. I am sure that this decision was inevitable for us. To say that the United Kingdom Government has compelled us or even advised us to devalue the rupee is completely wrong. To say that this is a consequence of our being in the Commonwealth is an absurdity. Pakistan in spite of being in the Commonwealth has not devalued her currency. The fact is that we have to face a certain compulsion of events. It may be that this devaluation does good to India in the long run, however much it may produce difficulties for us at present. I am totally unrepentant and I am still prepared to say that there is no essential unsoundness about India's economic position. It is clear, however, that the present position is difficult and that all of us will have to exercise the most rigid economy. This applies not only to the Central Government but also to the provincial governments and states.

5 We have talked a great deal about planning in the past and we have also produced many reports on the subject. But our planning has been confined to special industries or activities. It has not been on what might be called a national scale. And yet planning has no meaning unless it is comprehensive and has clear objectives in view. I think that the time has come when we should take some step towards the development of a suitable planning authority. This planning authority must deal with the whole of India. But, of course, the actual execution of the plans will have to be left largely to provincial governments. It would probably be desirable for the provincial and state governments to have their own planning officers who could deal directly with the central planning authority. About this I shall write to you more when our own plans develop.

6 The basis of all planning must necessarily be self-sufficiency in food. Thus we come back again to the food problem. *If we have enough food in the country, we can to some extent carry on even without other goods.* I trust therefore that you will continue the food campaign with full vigour. Your

2 October, 1949

Food Ministers will be coming to Delhi soon to discuss various matters,⁵ including the question of a reduction both in food prices and in the prices of some other essential commodities. I think that in spite of the devaluation we can reduce prices somewhat. I realise fully that there are strong arguments against the reduction of the procurement prices of foodgrains. I do not think it is intended to make a big reduction. My sympathies in this matter are very largely with the farmers and the peasants who have in the past suffered so much. Nevertheless, it should be possible to make a reduction partly in the cost of the machinery for procurement and partly in the price of the grain itself. At the same time the price of some commodities needed by the peasants must also go down.

7 It was our intention to import a very large quantity of fertilizers. I am afraid we shall have to limit this quantity very strictly as the prices have gone up because of devaluation. You may not, therefore, be able to get the quantity of fertilizers that you had asked for. This means that you must pay increased attention to the production of indigenous compost. I think that if we can spend even a small proportion of the money we would have had to pay for the fertilizers on the production of compost, we would go far in this direction.

8 In regard to the economic situation and the need to conserve dollars, I regret to say that some of our development schemes have to be postponed. I am sorry for this and I hope that the postponement will not be for long. We must take up our major development schemes before very long, because on them depends the future progress of the country. It is better to live a hard life today so that tomorrow might be provided for. For the present, however, it is desirable to economise in every respect so that we may be in a strong position next year to make further advance.

9 I should like to draw your attention again in this connection to the urgent necessity of your reconsidering various schemes of social reform to which some of the provinces are committed. Those reforms are obviously good in themselves. But a good thing may have evil consequences if done at the wrong time. We are committed to prohibition. If prohibition, however, has grave consequences on our economy or stops the most urgent work of government, then ordinary prudence tells us that it should be brought in by degrees so that we can adjust ourselves to the change. Otherwise the blame for stopping progressive activities will fall on prohibition.

10 I should like to draw your attention in this connection also to the methods of enforcing prohibition. I am told that sometimes these are crude and offensive to a degree and harass the average person very greatly. Thus sometimes the policeman or an inspector insists on smelling a person's mouth to see if he has been drinking or not. This kind of thing is almost a personal affront and can only breed anger and ill will. Prohibition should essentially mean the prohibition to sell alcoholic drinks.

11 I think I have written to you previously about horse racing and the gambling which usually accompanies it. People may have differing views on this subject. But there are certain aspects of it which must be kept in mind. There is the economic aspect of course that we cannot afford to lose substantial revenue at this time. The petty gambling connected with horse racing may be bad and should be discouraged. But it is a relatively petty offence and it is always possible to drive it underground and thus making it worse. The main argument however is connected with horse breeding. It is of importance to us to encourage horse breeding both for our army and other purposes. If horse racing is affected, horse breeding inevitably suffers and that means that we have to spend large sums of money in importing horses from abroad.

12 We have had a great deal of trouble during the past months in regard to cotton textiles and mills. Owing to the congestion of cloth and yarn stocks in mills a difficulty had arisen and certain mills had actually to close down. Obviously this tendency has to be checked. After a careful examination of the whole situation and full consultation with industry and labour and distributors certain steps in modification of the previous system of textile control have been introduced. These modifications may cause some disturbance in the channels of distribution which the provincial and state governments have built up. I hope however that the revised control on textiles will be given a full trial and that your government will cooperate with us on this subject.

13 Owing to devaluation we have to think a little more in terms of commercial crops. We have to grow more of jute, sugar cane, cotton and oil seeds. Thus our Grow More Food programme will have to take this into consideration and the various crops will have to be balanced. Regarding subsidiary foods, that is high yielding crops, the best course appears to be to grow them in a relatively small area, say 5 or 10 acres in villages near towns.

14 I have recently visited East Punjab as well as Kashmir.⁴ I was pleased with my visit to East Punjab as I found a great improvement there since I last went. There was an air of stability and a healthy feeling of making progress. There are many difficult problems still, notably a tendency to faction. I hope however that progress will be maintained in East Punjab.

15 The visit to Kashmir as always gave me great pleasure. There was the first convocation of the university there and a session of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.⁵ This

⁴ From 17 to 26 September 1949

⁵ On 24 September 1949

session was very successful and very representative. It showed the organisational and popular strength of the National Conference under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. It showed also the strength of will in Kashmir in favour of remaining with India.

16 I found an improvement in many directions in Kashmir. The administration was running more smoothly, supplies were greater, and on the whole complaints were fewer. There was an air of confidence about the leaders of Kashmir. Indeed, the position in Kashmir in regard to supplies and general conditions of living is such that people tend to come over from the Pakistan held territory where prices are much higher. There was a river procession in Srinagar and this was a magnificent sight which cannot be equalled anywhere else in India.

17 You may have heard of recent developments in regard to Kashmir. General Delvoie⁶, the Military Adviser to the U N Commission, acted with grave impropriety a few days ago and actually broke open some seals of the Kashmir Government and sent property belonging to a declared enemy agent⁷ from Srinagar to Rawalpindi. We take a serious view of this matter and are communicating with the U N Commission in regard to it.

18 The Government of Madras have recently, with our approval, banned the Communist Party of India in their province.⁸ There has been a general approval of this step taken. Indeed the criticism has been that it was belated. I should like

⁶ General Maurice Delvoie, Belgian military adviser to the U N Commission, 1949.

⁷ Sardar A R Effendi, a tribal leader from Kashmir who had migrated to Pakistan.

⁸ The Tamilnad, Andhra, Kerala and Karnataka branches of the Communist Party and 19 affiliated labour unions were declared unlawful on 26 September by the Madras Government.

to repeat here that this banning is entirely due to the violent activities of the Communist Party. It has nothing to do with ideology or theory. A recent pamphlet issued by the Government of India gives some information about these declared activities of the Communist Party in regard to violence, sabotage and general disruption. We have much more evidence and we may issue another pamphlet later. The activity of the Communist Party has taken place largely in Hyderabad state and in some parts of Madras and West Bengal. In Hyderabad it was encouraged by the very backward land tenure system. I am glad to inform you that considerable progress has been made to change this land tenure system in Hyderabad. The big jagirs are being ended and one of the biggest estates, Wanaparthy, has recently been taken over by the Government of Hyderabad.

19 In China the Communist armies have established a Central Government. This brings to the fore the question of recognising this new government. We have asked our Ambassador to return to India for consultation. It is obvious that if a stable government is established for the whole of China or a very great part of it, the fact cannot be ignored and has to be acknowledged. How and when this should be done is a matter for careful thought.

20 India is standing for a seat in the Security Council.⁹ Pakistan has been carrying on a virulent campaign against us in this, as in other matters. I am glad to say that this campaign has had little effect and it is highly likely that we shall get elected to the Security Council.

21 Our attention has been drawn from time to time to senior officers in the Army receiving public addresses and sometimes delivering speeches. We should like to discourage this. It is not

9 On 20 October 1949 India was elected to the Security Council.

usual for army officers to deliver public speeches and there is no reason why we should encourage this practice in India

22 During the last two or three weeks, I have received a large number of complaints about the working of the evacuee property ordinance. We have given much thought to this matter and probably a revised ordinance will be issued before long.¹⁰ It is clear that we have to take effective steps in regard to evacuee property, that is the property of those who have definitely left India. We must take possession of this and, pending a final settlement with Pakistan, use it for the relief and rehabilitation of our own displaced persons. No question arises about this property which is admitted to be evacuee. Questions, however, arise in doubtful cases where a person has not left India but may intend to leave India and makes remittances in preparation for this. It is right that we should prevent this subterfuge, but in doing so we have to be very careful that no injustice is done to any of our nationals. Cases of injustice have come up before me and they have distressed me greatly. This was so not only because there was injustice to an individual but even more so because it gave a bad name to our country, and people said that our talk of a secular State had no reality in fact. I would therefore request you to give explicit and clear instructions to the custodians of evacuee property that they have to be very careful in applying the ordinance in doubtful cases. The benefit of the doubt must always be given to the party concerned. We must avoid creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and lack of security in the minds of large numbers of our Muslim fellow countrymen. This has far reaching consequences not only in India but also in Kashmir. It

10 The ordinance of 18 October 1949 replaced separate provincial and state laws regarding evacuee property. The ordinance defined the evacuee property, liberalized the procedure of declaring a property as evacuee and provided for judicial appeal against decisions of the custodian of evacuee property.

affects our reputation abroad. A few houses or shops attached or taken possession of do not make very much difference. But, if wrongly done, they do affect our reputation and thus injure us.

23 I know that Pakistan is pursuing a policy of utter callousness in this matter. We cannot copy the methods or the ideals of Pakistan. They have declared themselves openly to be an Islamic State believing in the two nation theory. We reject that theory and call ourselves a secular State giving full protection to all religions. We have to live up to our ideals and declarations. More especially on this day, Gandhi Jayanti, it is for us to remember what Gandhiji taught us and what he died for.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
1 December 1949

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you this fortnightly letter after an interval of two months. My colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, was good enough to discharge the functions of the Prime Minister, in addition to his own heavy duties during my absence from India. He has addressed you two fortnightly letters during this period.¹

2 There is such an abundance of subjects on which I should like to address you that I find it a little difficult to pick and choose. I could say much about my visit to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. I could discuss foreign affairs generally and the situation in the world with its possibilities of further crises and trouble. I could, in particular, refer to rapidly changing Asia and the emergence of a strong centralised State in China under communist control with all the far reaching consequences that must flow from this. I should like to say something about the economic situation in India, the food problem, the sugar muddle,² and the urgent necessity of our having clear objectives and a machinery to achieve them.

Then again I could refer to the passing of our Constitution after three years of discussion and debate,³ and the significance of the 26th January when India will start a new chapter in her age long history.⁴ Internal problems affect us most and inevitably we have to pay the greatest attention to them. Ultimately it is the strength and stability of India that enables her to play any part in world affairs, or to control her own destiny. At the same time, world developments exercise a powerful influence on the domestic situation. More and more domestic happenings and foreign affairs become parts of the same picture and national problems are closely related to international problems. Perhaps in the final analysis, there is only one major and basic problem in the world, and all others are small or big parts of it.

3 A great deal has been written about my visit to America. Every word that I uttered there in public has been reported. Since my return also I have said something about this visit. There is little that I can add to it. I have little doubt that looking at it objectively and impersonally it was an event of some historic significance. Certainly the people in America looked upon it as such and from all accounts people in other countries also attached great importance to this visit. Whatever the personal factor might have been this visit certainly became in the eyes of many an event in the development of a new historic process. It represents the ending of the period of Asia's subservience in world affairs, as well as in domestic matters to Europe and America. It was a recognition in a sense an awareness of this major fact of our age. India of course counted in this picture. But it was something even more than India that I spoke about and that people felt. This does not mean that India or Asia have suddenly pushed themselves to the front and made their weight felt by virtue of any strength.

3 The Constitution of India was adopted on 26 November 1949 after being passed in the third reading by the Constituent Assembly and authenticated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly.

4 The birth of the Indian Republic was to be exactly twenty years after the first taking of the independence pledge at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress on 26 January 1930.

that they might possess, military or economic. They have no such strength today, except potentially and rather negatively. Nevertheless, the fact that something vital, historic, and of far reaching consequence was happening in Asia came before the people of the West and compelled them to refashion their world view.

4 Probably the greatest single factor in Asia which interested or disturbed large numbers of people in the West was the emergence of the new Chinese State under Communist control. Many people did not like this and were apprehensive of it. Yet the fact stared them in the face and facts cannot long be denied.

5 I was greatly affected by the warmth of the welcome that I received, both in the United States and in Canada. That welcome was not merely an official welcome but had a strong popular element in it. It grew in volume and quality during the later part of my stay. This in itself indicated that what I was saying there was touching some chords in the minds and hearts of the people. Perhaps this is the most significant part of it all. My speeches generally addressed to a variety of audiences evoked some kind of an emotional response which surprised me. More particularly my speech at Columbia University⁵ had a marked reaction on intellectual America and I received many letters about it from persons important in the world of politics, literature and science. It seemed to me that there was a state of mental unrest and disillusion in the minds of those who think. There was a sense of dissatisfaction at the general trend of world affairs and at the same time, a sense of helplessness and

5 Delivering the address at Columbia University on 17 October where he was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, Nehru appealed to all thinking men and women in the world to recognise the great potential contained in Mahatma Gandhi's moral weapon for achieving world peace. Explaining India's policy of detachment from power blocs in the interest of world peace, Nehru said that there was some lesson in India's peaceful revolution which might be applied to the larger problems of the world today.

doubt as to what should be done. What I said, simple enough as it was, appeared to supply some kind of vague answer to this questioning. That answer was vague enough and indeed I myself have no clear answer in my mind. Nevertheless, because my approach was somewhat different and because I spoke to them with all frankness and sincerity of purpose, I struck a responsive chord in their minds and for the moment greatness was thrust upon me. All this led me to think that in spite of the conflicts and hatreds and passions that consume our unhappy world, there was a widespread desire for peace and cooperation among nations and a search for some way to achieve it.

6 I approached the American people in all friendliness. I was not prepared to be swept away by any passing wind. But I was receptive in mind and frank in approach. As always happens in such cases the reaction was friendly and frank even where there was a difference of opinion. That again led me to think how wrong it is for us, as individuals or as nations, always to criticise the other and to point out defects in others. It is far better to think of the good points of other people and other nations, for we can learn from them and indeed by pointing them out, we encourage them. If this psychological approach was adopted by us in our lives and in our policies, most of our problems would be easy of solution. That I take it, was the basic approach of Gandhiji and that was why he drew out the best in us, weak as we were. Even his opponents bowed down before that greatness of spirit and deep understanding of human nature.

7 I was interested in getting such help as was possible in the economic and technical sphere from the United States.⁶ I

6 Nehru's visit was followed by an Indo American Conference in December in Delhi at which the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State George McGhee explaining President Truman's four point programme for development of backward areas stated that legislation for enactment by the U.S. Congress was before the appropriate Committee for providing 45 million dollars as aid to backward areas. Of this "a substantial sum for technical assistance" was proposed to be allocated to India.

mentioned this, though rather casually I realised that what was of more fundamental importance was the general reaction of the American people towards India and towards Asia. If that was friendly and cooperative, other things would follow. So, I concentrated on producing that friendly reaction. Perhaps, it is more true to say that I did not concentrate on anything, but that I offered our friendship in such a way as to convince them of our sincerity of purpose and to make them respect our holding on to our own views and our own way of life.

8 Thus there was no deal in so far as I was concerned, either political or economic. I left business talks to others like our Ambassador and Shri Chintaman Deshmukh.⁷ I supplied them with an atmosphere which was very favourable for any talk or approach.

9 The United States is a great country, not only in power and wealth but in other ways also. In some respects an outsider like me felt out of place there, and rather critical. But I felt how foolish it was for us here in India or elsewhere to sit down in our little corner and criticise others for their failings, calling them materialistic and worshippers of the almighty dollar and no more. That was true enough to some extent. But it was a very partial truth and it was a cheap way of describing a country. In the same way, some people criticise or hurl abuse at Soviet Russia. That criticism is often largely justified. But it is only partial truth. By judging a whole country in this slapdash way we do not do justice to it or to ourselves. We merely confuse our minds and close them to many aspects of the truth. The fact is that the United States and Soviet Russia, vastly different as they are, have much in common also and have both very great achievements to their credit. Let us look at

7 (1896-1982) Entered the I.C.S. 1919 Governor Reserve Bank 1943-49 member Planning Commission 1950 Union Minister of Finance 1950-56 Chairman University Grants Commission 1956-60 Vice Chancellor Delhi University 1962-67

their achievements and learn from them instead of criticising their failings or what we consider to be their failings

10 This general approach might be said to govern our foreign policy and I hope our general view of life. We hold to our anchor and refuse to be swept away by outside currents. We do not look at the world with eyes full of fear even though there is much that is bad and fearful in the world. We try to draw attention to the good in other countries and to profit by it ourselves. We try to understand the great forces that are moving in the world and reshaping it.

11 In China these forces are most obviously at work and every day brings a change. It does not matter whether we like those changes or not. It is one of the major changes in history and Asia and the world are going to be affected by it. Therefore it was clear to us that we should recognise the new Government in China. We discussed this matter with foreign statesmen and I believe made them appreciate our argument.⁸ The position now is that the new regime in China is likely to be recognised in the course of some weeks by a number of countries.⁹ We are not bound down in this respect to any other country. But it is desirable to function in consultation and in cooperation with others.

12 All the border countries of China are affected by these developments. India is not directly affected in the sense of any military danger. It is possible that the Chinese Communist regime may spread to Tibet though that is unlikely before the

⁸ During his visit abroad, Nehru held discussions with statesmen in U.K., U.S.A. and Canada. Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary made agreement on the Japanese peace treaty a condition before recognition was given to China. He also wanted India, Burma and Pakistan to support Britain, Australia and New Zealand in maintaining Hong Kong's status quo.

⁹ The Soviet Union and the East European countries had recognised the new government in China in October. Burma was the first non communist country to accord it recognition on 9 December followed by India on 30 December and by Great Britain, Norway and Sri Lanka on 6 January 1950.

summer of next year. Even if it so spreads, there is no military danger from that quarter to India. The best guarantee of India's safety from that frontier is the inhospitable terrain and climate of Tibet as well as the mountains that separate Tibet from India. Our policy has been rather vague about Tibet. It has been an inheritance from British days. We have recognised the autonomy of Tibet under some kind of vague suzerainty of China. Strictly speaking, in law, we cannot deny that suzerainty. We would like Tibet to be autonomous and to have direct dealings with us and we shall press for this. But it is clear that we cannot bring any effective pressure to change the course of events in Tibet. Therefore, we must be cautious about the steps that we might take so as not to get entangled in enterprises which are beyond our strength. We have accepted certain facts as they are. I emphasize this aspect as there is often vague talk about India doing this or that in other countries, regardless of the obvious factors in each case. One thing is dead clear. We will not permit the slightest intervention, aggression or invasion of any Indian territory wherever it might be.

13 *We are concerned with some of our border countries or States.* Bhutan and Sikkim may be considered as definite parts of India from this point of view. Nepal is not. But it is too intimately related to India for us to view with unconcern what happens there internally or externally. During the last two years or more, we have been constantly pressing the Government of Nepal to take a realistic view of the situation in all its aspects. We have urged major domestic reforms as that is the only way to strengthen the country. Now, with the development of the Chinese situation, the internal and external forces of Nepal have become of even greater importance to us. Any threat to Nepal ultimately becomes a threat to us.

14 *Our other neighbour country, Pakistan, is still a major problem for us.* More and more it seems to me that we have to deal with a case of national neurosis in regard to Pakistan. Their newspapers and the speeches of their politicians are

hysterical and full of threats. Their actions in western or eastern Pakistan are such as to create difficulties and conflicts. It is true that our own people after the terrible experience of the partition and what followed are not entirely free from neurosis. But I believe that we are far better in this respect than the people and the Government of Pakistan. There are tendencies here in India to push us in the direction that Pakistan has gone. We are criticised for being weak and for appeasing Pakistan and we are called upon to retaliate. I am convinced that there could be no greater folly for us than to move away from our own principles and follow in Pakistan's wake in the name of retaliation. We might have erred occasionally but there has been no weakness on our side and no surrender on any vital matter. I think the only course that we can follow is to be firm in our policies and not to be hustled into a wrong direction either by Pakistan's threats or by the demands of some of our own people for retaliation. Retaliation as such is bad in principle. But there is something more to it. It brings harmful consequences in its train even for us. We get into a vicious circle of always trying to hit the other and being hit ourselves.

15 I find there has been some outcry about our evacuee property ordinance.¹⁰ I gave a great deal of thought to this before I went to America because I do not want any weakness on our side on the one hand in dealing with this problem and any wrong policy to be adopted by us simply because Pakistan was behaving very badly.¹¹ I am quite clear that we must not

10 On 4 December a public meeting organised by Sindh Hindu Seva Samiti Bombay described the ordinance as "weak" because it did not cover the properties of all Muslim evacuees. Nor did it vest custody of such properties in the Custodian. Besides the ordinance also allowed transfer of money to these persons for business or other purposes.

11 The Evacuee Property Ordinance promulgated in Pakistan on 15 October was ruthlessly enforced. Between 19 and 22 October one thousand Hindus left Karachi after being deprived of their movable and immovable properties compared to 580 persons who left Karachi in August.

surrender to any demand which is not based on justice. We have declared frequently that we shall treat all minorities in India on a par with the majority so far as rights are concerned. We have repeated that the forty millions of Muslims in India have nothing to fear and are equal citizens with others. We have to stand by that declaration whatever happens and this is not merely because of the justice of the case but also because of its expediency, as any thinking person will see. In spite of this, some people want us to adopt a policy of vicarious punishment simply because Pakistan has gone a long way in that direction. Our Government is going to be no party to this kind of thing, and I should like your government to appreciate this fully and to act up to it.

16 I have written to you on this subject previously and made it clear that in the implementation of the evacuee property ordinance there should be no injustice and no discrimination. Yet cases have come to me of individual Muslims being treated in a way which surprises me. Men who have taken part in our national struggle in the past and suffered for it have been harassed by the application of this ordinance because some distant relative of theirs was in Pakistan. I mention this because I attach importance to our pledged word and to the policy which we hold and have declared.

17 Apart from Kashmir there are two major problems as between us and Pakistan. There is the problem of evacuee property and that of canal water. There is also, of course, the consequence of devaluation which has led to a stoppage of trade between India and Pakistan. It seems to me that both the evacuee property question and the canal water question, if they cannot be settled by mutual agreement, must be referred to some impartial tribunal. We cannot carry on indefinitely with these running sores.

18 Kashmir stands upon a different footing. There can be no reference to arbitration or tribunal on the question of Kashmir.

for obvious reasons. We have however made it clear that we do not want this or any other question between us and Pakistan to be settled by force of arms. The only other method left is by some process of mediation however long that might take. That is what we have suggested. Meanwhile we continue where we are and prepare for any emergency. The U N Commission on Kashmir will soon report to the Security Council¹². We are sending a delegation consisting of our Secretary General Shri Ginja Shankar Bappai and Sheikh Abdullah to Lake Success for this purpose. I think on the whole there is a fuller realisation of the Kashmir issue in the West than there has been in the past.

19 As you may have noticed in the press there is going to be a conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers in Colombo beginning on the 9th January¹³. I intend going to it. I cannot remain away from India for long and I hope to be back by the 16th January. This conference was fixed over a year ago. We are not therefore holding it in Colombo just because of recent developments in Asia but of course these recent developments will be considered. Our recognition of the new regime in China does not depend upon that conference.

20 The 26th of January is not very far off and we shall have to observe it by a proper ceremonial. As has been our practice recently we do not intend to indulge in any considerable pomp or pageantry in view of the economic situation that is fitting. We have also decided not to invite prominent statesmen or others from abroad on this occasion. There is one exception however and that is of President Soekarno of the Indonesian Republic. I should like your government to think out the arrangements for January 26th in your province. A committee is considering the matter here and we shall send you some suggestions. But meanwhile you may also appoint a small

12 The U N Kashmir Commission's report was presented to the U N Secretary General at New York on 12 December.

13 From 9 to 14 January 1950.

committee for the purpose. Apart from any major ceremonial, there are many minor changes to be made because of the transition to the Republic. Among other things, the flag that your Governor uses will have to change¹⁴ and the Crown will have to be removed wherever it is. It is not necessary to make structural alterations all at once. This can be done at leisure later.

21 I referred to President Soekarno above. I would have greatly liked to go to Indonesia on the occasion of the inauguration of the United States of Indonesia on January 1st. That is a historic occasion for Asia, and for us in India especially, it is a matter of great satisfaction. Our relations with Indonesia have been close and intimate. President Soekarno invited me to this function but, very regretfully, I have had to express my inability to go just then. It is not possible for me to leave India at that time. I hope, however, to go to Indonesia some time next year. I am requesting my colleague Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, our Health Minister, to represent our Government and people on this occasion in Indonesia.

22 I sent you a few days ago copies of Dr. Trone's reports¹⁵ I

14 A new flag for the President and another for Governors and Rajpramukhs were designed by the Department of Archaeology. The Governor's flag had the state crest and the name of the state or province in Devanagari script against plain saffron background.

15 In his report of 4 October 1949, Trone recommended (1) that real authority about decision making should rest with the local authorities (2) that Ministers and senior officials should get first hand knowledge of the local conditions through personal visits (3) that conditions of workers like housing etc., should be improved (4) basic mechanization be introduced especially in mining to increase the productivity of labour (5) well qualified personnel be recruited for specified work (6) work on projects should synchronize with the time of delivery of machines from abroad and availability of spare parts (7) India should be self sufficient in industry for which development of steel and electrical industry was of prime importance. He observed that planning in India till then had been very unsatisfactory and at best it was provincial or departmental. He suggested setting up of a central planning body with experienced and qualified persons as its members to work directly under the Prime Minister.

hope you have read them with the care they deserve. At any time this analysis of the Indian situation in regard to industrial matters by a man of great ability and experience would have been important and helpful. In the present state of affairs it has a peculiar value. We look at the Indian scene at close quarters and see it in detail and know a great deal about it. Because of that very detail there is some danger of our losing perspective. Most of us who are engaged in the business of government are so overwhelmed with problems and day to day duties that we have no time to look at this broad picture and to think about it in relation to the world. It is therefore particularly helpful for a man with world experience and with not only a technical but also a human approach to these problems to look at India as she is and give his candid opinion. That opinion may not be correct in regard to details or even in regard to some overall judgment. For instance I think that Dr Trone has not appreciated fully the agrarian situation in India chiefly because he has had little chance to study it except in small patches. Nevertheless the broad perspective is there and the comparison with conditions in other countries.

23 As you know for many years past we have talked about planning. I have been personally associated with this planning business since I was made Chairman of the National Planning Committee in 1938. One of my first acts on joining government in September 1946 was to appoint an Advisory Planning Board of which Shri K. C. Neogy was Chairman. I was eager to get on with this business and we gave the Board three months to report as to the machinery of planning. The Board presented its report within the time stipulated but by that time the Muslim League had come in and they opposed every attempt at planning. There was continuous conflict within the government and ultimately there was the partition. What followed made any constructive approach to our problems impossible for many months. So this question of planning was postponed from month to month. I tried to make a small beginning by setting up an economic unit as well as a statistical

unit attached to the Cabinet Secretariat here. The Cabinet also appointed an economic committee of its own.¹⁶ Committees of statisticians and economists working in government departments were also set up to advise us. It was proposed to start a Central Statistical Institute, because it was felt that proper statistics were quite essential to any kind of organised effort, and more especially to planning. All these vague approaches were made but nothing definite was done in so far as planning was concerned. We were caught up in the rapidly flowing current of events and had to face one difficulty after another. I feel rather strongly now that we made a mistake in not thinking in terms of organised planning earlier. We have had the cloth muddle last year.¹⁷ We had only recently the sugar muddle. No government can control either events or the many forces that go to make up the economic life of a country. At the same time, no government should be so helpless in the face of such developments as took place in regard to cloth or sugar. There is legitimate criticism all over the country about the way we handled or failed to handle the situation in regard to these matters. Our failure is not due to any lack of effort on our part but rather to a lack of appreciation of a particular situation and a lack of data to judge it. All this points to the urgent necessity of organised planning.

24 We should not expect any wonderful results to follow immediately from planning. The machinery has to be built up and has to gather experience and, through trial and error, to learn how to act efficiently. But the need for that machinery is obvious. Of course everything depends upon the human factor and the quality of men who run the machine. I am sharing my thoughts with you in this matter. We have come to no conclusion. But I have little doubt that we should come to a decision soon.

25 If a planning authority is set up at the Centre, it naturally

¹⁶ See ante p 329

¹⁷ See ante p 138

follows that each province or state should have some counterpart of it closely associated with the central authority. It follows that there must be the closest cooperation between the provinces and the Centre in this respect. Also of course that each department of government whether at the Centre or in the provinces must coordinate its activities with other departments. There has been far too much independent functioning all over the place and sometimes one department does not even know what the other is doing in some matter which concerns it. Provinces are autonomous and I believe definitely in provincial autonomy and a large measure of decentralisation. But there are certain tendencies which in the name of autonomy prevent coordinated functioning. That seems to me to be dangerous and harmful. Even the talk of linguistic provinces and a fresh demarcation of provincial boundaries legitimate as it is in many cases emphasises the separateness of provinces as if almost they were independent entities and not partners in a common concern.

26 Another matter to which Dr Trone has drawn attention is the divorce often enough between authority and responsibility. I think there is much in his criticism and I have myself noticed how slowly governments function because of this hiatus. No big undertaking or business can be run on this basis. There must be of course checking and constant supervision. But to hold up work for petty sanctions from distant authority is not only to delay but waste money and energy. It is not sufficiently realised that time in this context is money. Every delay in a scheme is costing money all the time. Whether in business or in military affairs policy is laid down, the proper officers chosen and a large measure of freedom of action is given within the limits of that policy and direction. Constant supervision is of course always necessary but in a way so that it does not impede work.

27 The basis of planning has to be proper information to be derived from reliable statistics. We lack these statistics.

Hence even in such an important matter as food production, we grope in the dark and proceed on figures based on guess work. We must function in a more scientific manner and, therefore, the building up of statistical work is of the highest importance. I hope that we shall have your full cooperation in this. I should like independent checks to be made of food production in various parts of the country by a competent authority. We may be able to organise this a little later.

28 I understand that the general food situation is more or less satisfactory and we are going ahead, in spite of some disasters such as the cyclone in Andhra.¹⁸ Some newspapers have been suggesting that we cannot make good as we intend to, by the end of 1951. I want it to be clearly understood that on no account whatever are we going to weaken in our resolve about food imports by 1951. If it becomes absolutely necessary, we shall call upon the country to eat less by giving up a meal now and then. There is a finality about this decision which must be understood by all concerned.

29 I am troubled at the prospect of some of our productive schemes being delayed or postponed because of the need for economies. We must economise on all fronts, we must have balanced budgets, and we may even delay many things that we want to do. But if we stop work on our productive schemes, then we affect the tomorrow for which we are working. It is not difficult to suffer hardship today so that we might have a tomorrow to look forward to. But if tomorrow also offers no prospect of relief, then it becomes more difficult to face even today. Therefore, we must make every effort to carry on with our productive schemes. Of course, there must be priority and we cannot spread ourselves out and undertake everything that we can think of and thereby delay everything.

¹⁸ Vijayawada and Masulipatam were hit by a cyclone on the night of 27 October taking a heavy toll of life and causing damage to property worth crores of rupees.

30 I am glad that the services both civil and defence have agreed to various cuts in their salaries or to schemes of compulsory savings ¹⁹ From the financial point of view this is desirable but it is still more necessary from the psychological point of view Our people generally must realise that the burden is shared all round Sometimes whispers reach me of some of our people in the services not liking these cuts or compulsory savings I am sure this must be due to a lack of appreciation of the present situation I have no doubt that every person in the services is anxious to do his utmost to help both by his efficient work and by a small measure of sacrifice the measures that we take to solve our economic difficulties What is required not only in the services but also in the people generally is a full realisation of our difficulties and of our objectives and at the same time a crusading zeal to overcome those difficulties by cooperative effort and to achieve those objectives We have to get rid of the inertia and the inertness of the people who often enough just look to government to perform miracles Nothing big is done unless there is that spirit and that zeal in the people No problem however great is insoluble if we have that crusading spirit

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

19 As part of the Government's economy drive a compulsory savings scheme was introduced covering all civil defence railway and posts and telegraph employees drawing more than Rs. 250 per month

New Delhi
15 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

The end of the year is bringing a multitude of problems and it is a little difficult either to keep pace with them or with other events that are happening in the rest of the world. In six weeks time India will take a historic step and become a Republic. Although we have been an independent nation for over two years now, with full control of our domestic and foreign policy, there is no doubt that January 26th will bring about a very significant change in our position in the world. We have decided that this change should be observed with due solemnity, but at the same time with simplicity, and without too much display. Our programme for Delhi will be sent to you soon. You will no doubt draw up appropriate programmes for your province, keeping in line with what we do in New Delhi.

2 The change over to a Republic naturally involves the change of many forms and symbols¹ in our public and governmental life. These will have to be replaced gradually. There is no necessity to rush through the process. The more obvious symbols might be replaced before the 26th or covered up such as in Durbar Halls and the like. It is not desirable to make a fuss about these changes and the less attention is attracted the better. Some people suggest that many paintings and statuary representing the period of British rule in India,

1 For example the emblem depicting the British Crown was replaced by the head of the Asokan pillar. The words *Satyameva Jayate* meaning truth alone triumphs were inscribed in Devanagari script on the emblem.

should be removed. Many of them, no doubt, will have to be removed, though possibly some may remain. There is no need to start this wholesale removal suddenly. Whatever is done should be done with courtesy and so as to avoid any exhibition of ill will. You will have noticed the recent references made in the British House of Commons to the coming of the Republic in India. There were graceful and generous references by representatives of all parties.² Having accepted a certain change, the British people have acted as gracefully as possible. We should also not be lacking in grace or courtesy.

3 I propose to remain in New Delhi till the end of the year. On the 31st, I am going to Nagpur and from there to Sevagram. At Sevagram I hope to meet the members of the International Pacifists Conference³ who have already met at Santiniketan. From Nagpur I propose to go to Poona to attend a session of the Indian Science Congress.⁴ I return to Delhi on the 3rd January evening. After four days' stay here, I proceed to Colombo for the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Conference.

2 Introducing the India (Consequential Provisions) Bill on 5 December 1949. Philip Noel Baker, Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, declared that "the nations of the Commonwealth have shown that the winning of sovereign independence can make cooperation between governments and peoples even closer than before. In India we shall have a partner whose nationhood is already a major factor in Commonwealth and international affairs, a partner destined to material greatness." The Bill was supported by R. A. Butler (Conservative) and Clement Davies (Liberal) and was passed unanimously. It was aimed at safeguarding the rights and privileges enjoyed by India and Indian citizens under the British law after India became a Republic on 26 January 1950. It was enacted on 16 December 1949.

3 The International Pacifists Conference held at Santiniketan from 1 to 8 December and at Sevagram from 24 to 31 December under the chairmanship of Horace Alexander was attended by delegates from 35 countries. The object of the conference was to enable peace workers to meet Gandhiji's colleagues and other workers and discuss with them aspects of pacifism and non violence.

4 Nehru addressed the Congress on 2 January, the opening day.

4 I have referred in the previous paragraph to the Pacifists Conference. I am going to Sevagram not to attend the conference and not because I am a pacifist in the ordinary sense of the word. Certainly I desire peace, and a cessation of warfare. But as a member of a government which maintains armed forces, I cannot pretend to be a pacifist. Indeed, even apart from that I cannot call myself a pacifist and much as I appreciate the motives of the pacifists I believe that peace is more likely to be ensured by other means.

5 New Delhi has been full of eminent foreigners. Many of these have come to attend the India America Conference⁵ sponsored by the Indian Council of World Affairs.⁶ This conference has been wholly non official in character and, therefore I have not taken part in it, although I was greatly interested in the subjects discussed. But I have had the pleasure of meeting many of the delegates to this conference, who are eminent in the fields of science, education, journalism, industry, etc.⁷ I think that such conferences as well as the visit of eminent people from abroad is beneficial to India. Our vision is broadened by discussing world problems or Indian problems with visitors from other countries. Among these visitors have been also the members of the Unesco seminar for Asia which has recently been held near Mysore.⁸

6 Outstanding events in the domestic situation have been

5 The conference co-sponsored by the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations was held at New Delhi from 12 to 22 December to promote mutual understanding and research on problems of common interest and establish regular contact between the scholars of the two countries.

6 This was established in 1943 at New Delhi to promote the study of international relations and world affairs.

7 The American delegation consisted of 25 leading citizens of U S A including six presidents of universities prominent industrialists and scholars.

8 The seminar on adult education in Asia from 2 November to 14 December was inaugurated by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. It was attended by 60 delegates from Asian countries.

the opening of the railway link with Assam⁹ a Chief Minister¹⁰ taking the place of the Military Governor in Hyderabad, the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament and the agitation against it, the sugar position and the Grow More Food Campaign

7 The railway link with Assam at last puts an end to our dependence upon Pakistan for railway traffic between West Bengal and Assam. This should bear immediate fruit. Parts of Assam have suffered greatly because of the lack of a direct link with the rest of India and recently that is since the devaluation there has been a great deal of distress in certain parts of Assam because of the stoppage of trade with Eastern Bengal. The natural markets for the hill folk lie in Sylhet. These have been closed by Pakistan. The new railway link will give immediate relief to some extent.

8 The agitation against the Hindu Code Bill is certainly partly real and represents sincere opinions and feelings. But it is equally true that this matter is being exploited by various people for entirely different purposes.¹¹ The demonstration before the Council Chamber in New Delhi was revealing in many ways.¹² The R S S again came out into the public and

9 The railway link between Assam and the rest of the Indian Union was established when a new metre gauge line of 235 km was completed linking Jashanganj in Bihar to Fakirgaon in Assam. It was opened for goods traffic on 9 December 1949 and for passenger traffic from 26 January 1950.

10 M K Vellodi (b. 1896) joined I C S. Chief Secretary Government of Orissa 1939. Deputy High Commissioner for India in U.K. 1945. Secretary Ministry of States Government of India 1948-49. Chief Minister Hyderabad 1949-52. Secretary Ministry of Works Housing and Supply 1953. Defence Secretary 1953-57. Cabinet Secretary 1957-58. Ambassador to Switzerland 1958-62.

11 For instance a resolution was passed by the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha which characterised the Bill as opposed to the tenets of Hindu religion and urged the Government to withdraw it.

12 On 12 December when Parliament resumed consideration of the Hindu Code Bill there was a vociferous demonstration outside Parliament House by about 500 people who burned Gandhi caps and effigies and raised such slogans as "Down with the Hindu Code Bill" and "Down with the Nehru Government."

behaved not only in a political way, but in an aggressively and offensively political manner. I say this because we have been repeatedly told that the R S S was a non political body. This demonstrates that we cannot take these people at their word and have to be careful and prepared for contingencies. As you perhaps know, I have suggested that a committee representing various viewpoints should consider the Bill, so that we might deal with it with as large a measure of agreement as possible and with such modifications as may be necessary.

9 The sugar position continues to be unsatisfactory. There are so many authorities and people involved in this that it is not easy to apportion blame. We are inviting you to send representatives to an emergent meeting to be held in a few days' time to consider the sugar problem. In this, as in other matters, we have to consider the question in its national aspect and not in its provincial aspects.

10 One of our great difficulties in judging of any situation has been the lack of statistical data. Probably, the Grow More Food Campaign has suffered more from this lack than any other activity of government. It has thus become necessary to organise and develop our statistical activities as early as possible.

11 The sugar problem is only a relatively minor part of our general economic problem. It has attracted a great deal of attention partly because it affects the vocal section of the community and partly because there is a general belief that Government have muddled. It brings into prominence the competing claims of the town dweller and consumer and the rural producer. In regard to our larger economic problem, I sent you some time ago Dr. Trone's report and some of you have been good enough to send me your comments on it. We shall have to consider this entire question fully before long. Dr. Trone's report was naturally based on a fairly brief survey of industrial conditions in India. He referred casually to

agricultural conditions also. It was not a comprehensive report but it did bring out vividly a number of defects in our organisational set up in regard to industry. Many of those defects are obvious enough. The real question that arises is how to remove these defects. A planning organisation is suggested and on the whole there is agreement on the need for planning but opinions differ as to the nature and powers of the planning authority. Most of us, whether we are politicians or servicemen, look upon these problems from a theoretical and official point of view. That is important of course but an even more important aspect is the engineers and the technicians. Unless these two are combined a full picture is not seen.

12 The structure of our governments and their past work did not have much to do with the running of industry. Now however we are faced with the problem of encouraging and control of industry in many ways and our structure is perhaps not wholly suited for this. We have also to bring in the social outlook which is such a marked feature of the age and is in evidence in countries of varying economies, whether socialistic or capitalistic or something in between.

13 One way of looking at the problem of India is to concentrate on production. Ultimately we must have more production in order to make any progress. Production means capital and wealth formation which can be utilised for progress. Our productivity today, even with our existing machinery, is terribly low. There are both technical and psychological reasons for this and some of these have been pointed out in Dr Trone's report.

14 During the past few years we have talked a great deal of planning and produced many grandiose schemes. As a matter of fact we have not done any real planning on an all India scale. Drawing up different projects and schemes is not planning. I have a feeling that we have been functioning very much in the air and have lost touch with the ground. Economic

realities have suddenly pulled us back and we have to think afresh as to how we should proceed. One thing is clear to me and that is that the whole all India picture must be kept in view. For each province to go its own way in regard to planning is bound to lead to waste and delay, as it has done in the past.

15 You must have received the report of the University Commission.¹³ This report is worthy of your consideration. Soon we hope to have the reports and recommendations of the Unesco seminar which has recently been held in Mysore.¹⁴ I have been discussing the subject of adult education and literacy campaigns with a very able and experienced member of this seminar. The impression he gave me was that in his view our attempts at spreading education rapidly were not happily conceived and were not likely to yield results. We have been aiming at quantity and not quality. Literacy by itself does little good and in fact there is a quick relapse into illiteracy, unless there is some further development. Also the methods of removing illiteracy must be closely connected with habit, occupation and interest in life of the person concerned. Otherwise, there is no real comprehension, and what is learnt is soon forgotten. All this led me to think that we must look at our problems from a fresh viewpoint and thus avoid waste of effort and money.

16 The Kashmir question will be coming up before the Security Council within a few days. The Commission's report has recently come out. It is not a very satisfactory document.

¹³ The main conclusions of the Report of the University Commission were announced on 25 August 1949. The report dealt with various aspects of education including the medium of instruction, professional education and standards of teaching. The main thrust of the Report was towards making education more Indian in character.

¹⁴ The seminar emphasized the need for improvement in socio-economic conditions of the people in rural areas for the success of adult literacy campaigns. It suggested various methods for ensuring cooperation between the governments and Unesco to achieve this goal.

and is largely a record of the labours of the Commission in the cause of peace and settlement. They are naturally interested in showing that lack of success was not due to any fault of theirs. Their recommendations are in favour of mediation by a single person. We are prepared to accept this principle, but the choice of the mediator¹⁵ has to be carefully made and he must be given ample authority to explore every avenue.

17 In China the collapse of the old Nationalist regime is almost complete now. There is no effective opposition left on the mainland. The island of Formosa is now the headquarters of the refugee government. The question of recognising the new regime in China has been given a great deal of thought and consideration by a large number of countries. Our own position has been that there should be early recognition and we shall no doubt recognise this regime. This simply means recognising a fact which cannot be ignored. We delayed recognition in order to await further developments in China and also to bring about a certain uniformity in action of various countries concerned. There can be no absolute uniformity for all countries. We shall probably have to come to a final decision about the date in the course of the next few days.

18 In Indonesia the new United States of Indonesia will come into existence within the next fortnight.¹⁶ I was invited to go there on this occasion and I would have greatly liked to go but it is impossible for me to leave India at that time and so Rajagopal Amrit Nair has been asked to represent the Government of India. We shall soon be appointing an Ambassador to this new and promising State. With the

Republic of Indonesia, we have been in the most intimate contact for the past three years. I look forward to this friendly cooperation with the Indonesian State as of high importance, not only for our respective countries but for Asia.

19 In two of the Dominions of the Commonwealth, New Zealand¹⁸ and Australia,¹⁹ general elections have recently taken place resulting in a change of government. In both countries, labour Ministries have been ousted and more conservative Ministries have taken their place. The previous governments of these Dominions were on the most friendly terms with us and there was a certain community in outlook in regard to social and economic affairs. I do not know how the new Governments of New Zealand and Australia will conduct themselves in international or domestic matters. I am sure, however, that they will be friendly to India.

20 Our relations with Pakistan continue to be very strained. An additional point of conflict has arisen and this is the stoppage by Pakistan of a large quantity of jute purchased by us even before devaluation.²⁰ This jute had been paid for, loaded on barges and was actually in movement when it was stopped. In other ways too, Pakistan has practically put an end to the agreement arrived at with us some months ago. We have to consider carefully what steps we should take and the consequences of such steps which may well be serious for both countries.

18 Peter Fraser's Labour Government was defeated in the General Elections held on 30 November and the victorious National Party led by Sidney Holland formed the new government.

19 On 10 December the Labour Government in Australia was voted out in favour of a Liberal Country Party Coalition. Robert Gordon Menzies became the new Prime Minister.

20 The Pakistan Government held up nearly 5 lakhs of bales of raw jute worth crores of rupees already loaded on barges bound for India with the intention to detain them till the devaluation controversy was settled. The contract to buy this jute was entered into before devaluation and money had also been paid for it.

21 In regard to the Grow More Food Campaign it is very necessary to make the cultivators feel a certain enthusiasm for this work and indeed to recognise that it is really their work with government assisting them. For this purpose, it is desirable to constitute committees of villagers and to give these committees specific powers to reclaim waste land. This reclamation need not affect the ownership of the land. It does not seem proper that some owners should take no steps at all to use their land and should prevent others from doing so. Such waste lands might be given on lease for say three years. There may be some legal difficulties in the way but it should be possible to get over them. Ultimately we come up here as elsewhere against the conflict between the community's interest and certain individual's interest or lack of interest. The individual need not suffer in any way but the individual should not be allowed to prevent progress being made. Another desirable approach is to emphasise the Grow More Food Campaign in relation to the benefit based on the community or the group in the village rather than on the individual. Probably some kind of legislative action would be necessary to bring waste lands under cultivation as well as to induce municipalities to compost all their refuse.

22 It is clear that in the long run the improvement of agriculture demands large scale economic units. This is universally recognised. Unfortunately we are tied up with small holdings and we are encouraging even now small scale peasant proprietorship. Perhaps this cannot be avoided. But it must be remembered that this is no solution of the problem. We shall inevitably have to develop large scale cooperative farming. This can be done immediately and without any difficulty in regard to reclaimed lands which should either be run as big State farms or on the cooperative basis. Even in regard to the smaller peasant holdings attempts should be made wherever possible to introduce some form of cooperative organisation. It is not good enough to say that this is against our age long habits and might give rise to trouble. We

New Delhi
19 December, 1949

My dear Premier,*

About a year ago I drew your attention to the economic situation in India and to the desirability of provincial governments not undertaking any changes which might involve a considerable loss in revenue. In particular I referred to the policy of prohibition and proposals to discourage horse racing. Many of the provinces appreciated what I had written and have generally avoided introducing any such measures which might affect their revenues considerably. Some provinces, however, have proceeded with them.

Provincial governments have autonomy in this respect and can decide as they choose. But I feel I must write to you again on this subject because it is a matter of the utmost consequence in view of our economic situation. We have been compelled to limit, suspend or even abandon, for the time being very important projects affecting the well being of the masses. We have done so with a heavy heart because it became incumbent on us to balance our budget and to keep our expenditure within our means. We have been living under some false impression that our means were greater than they actually were. No country can continue to spend more than it earns, for long.

At the same time it is bad, both politically and psychologically, to stop those activities which are wealth producing or morale raising. It is bad to sacrifice tomorrow because of today's difficulty. We have had to face this dilemma and we are trying to find some middle way. Inevitably we are

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters

limited by our resources and we have to pick and choose as to what we have to give up in these straitened circumstances. Provincial governments have to face the same dilemma. Their own finances are affected and the loans or grants that they were expecting from the Central Government are also affected. They have rightly complained on this subject to us, pointing out that they had planned to start schemes such as housing etc. which were urgently required in the hope of getting help from the Centre now that help is not forthcoming in the measure that it was expected.

In this context, perseverance with prohibition and other like programmes which diminish revenue means directly the giving up of urgent social schemes such as education, housing, medical relief and sanitation, in addition to delaying some wealth producing activities. It seems to me that in this context it is most unwise from every point of view to proceed with prohibition etc. The Central Government cannot be expected at any time, much less in the present state of financial stringency, to find money to replace the income that might have come from the sources which are being stopped.

If the issue is to be judged from any moral plane, I have no doubt that other social reforms are far more important than prohibition. Large numbers of people are living in miserable hovels which are a disgrace to our country. We hardly provide them with any amenities of life. Surely it is far more necessary to progress along these other lines first, before doing something which casts tremendous burden on us and stops advance.

The political and economic consequences of this are also obvious.

Information has reached me that where prohibition has been enforced there is actually no less liquor drinking. Illicit liquor is made and is widely used. Corruption has come into an even greater extent than before. How far this is true, I do not know. But it is worthy of full enquiry.

In regard to horse racing, I hold strong views that any interference with it is detrimental to the national interests from a variety of points of view.

I am writing to you rather strongly on this subject because *circumstances are such that they demand frankness on our part* I should like you to give earnest consideration to these matters

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi
31 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you as this old year passes out and we start a New Year. This year, like its predecessor, has been a hard one for us. Only a great optimist will say that the new year will bring much relief from our troubles and burdens. Yet, as the new year comes, it brings a sense of fresh beginning and therefore a feeling of a new birth with all its hopes and expectations. I can hardly wish you a happy New Year. That is not only a trite wish but is also rather inappropriate. There is little of happiness round about us and a great deal of unhappiness. All I can wish you and hope for is that all of us will face our difficulties and problems with a stout heart and gradually overcome them.

2 There are certainly some signs of improvement in the state of the country. There is, I think, a slight but definite improvement in the economic position and there are signs of hope in the food campaign. Both are important. At the same time there is much that is distressing. Perhaps, the most unfortunate development of the past year or two has been the growth of a barrier between governments and the people. This barrier is largely one of lack of understanding and lack of contact. I do not mean to say that members of government do not keep in touch with the public. Many do. Nevertheless this barrier has grown. Governments are too absorbed in their official activities to pay much attention to developing contacts with the public.

3 In the old days government was completely isolated from the people and hostile to it. Undoubtedly there has been a great difference and certainly hostility has gone. And yet I feel that the gap between the two is still great and we tend to become more and more governmental and less and less popular leaders or popular workers. This is largely due to our being absorbed in governmental activities which increase from day to day and eat up our days and part of our nights.

4 The conviction grows upon me that we can solve no major problem without the active assistance and cooperation of the people. We have to work for the people but even that is not enough. What is required is that we work with the people also and produce a sensation in the public mind that they the people are workers in a great cause and for their own benefit. Once that sensation is produced work progresses with amazing rapidity. Without it all our efforts are limited and do not go far.

5 The coming of our Republic is a landmark in our history. It is something more as it forces us to think of our problems even more intensely than we normally do. We have to be clear in our own minds about our objectives and what we work for. Vague ideas and vague appeals do not carry much weight today. There can be little doubt that our administrative system both in the Centre and in the provinces badly needs improvement in efficiency and coordination. We have been thinking about this in the Central Cabinet and perhaps some changes might be made before long. But it is equally important for your government to bring about the necessary changes to increase efficiency and coordination. We have talked about planning for a long time without doing much in the real way of planning which means a well thought out and coordinated effort not only in each province or state but also in the country as a whole. Behind that coordinated effort must lie a full system of statistical information. That coordination must extend fully to the relation of the Centre with the provinces and states.

6 Quite a number of competent observers have given us their impressions of India during the last few weeks. All of them have laid stress on the lack of coordination not only between the Centre and the provinces but between different departments of governments both at the Centre and in the provinces. They have also criticised the divorce often enough of responsibility from authority. We should profit by these criticisms and remove the obstructions that come in the way of speedy and efficient work.

7 It is necessary not only to have a planned economic outlook which governs our activities in various sectors and gives us a yard measure for finding out from time to time where we have succeeded and where we have failed but we must also have a clear vision of our objectives in other fields. There are many people in this country who are producing confusion in people's minds by false slogans and cries. The Hindu Mahasabha has recently come into the field again with brave promises.¹ It is even talking in terms of socialism although socially speaking it is a most reactionary body. But the prospect of elections drawing near has galvanised it into some kind of activity and made it speak in a language which is peculiarly inappropriate for it and which probably it does not even wholly understand. It does not matter much if they do speak that language. But it does matter when they go on talking about a Hindu State and about recovering the area that is Pakistan now.

8 Nothing could be more foolish than to talk in this way. It has no meaning but it can do much harm. Unfortunately, since the partition especially there has been a great deal of this

1 N B Khare, President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, at its session at Calcutta on 25 December, said: 'the Hindu Mahasabha stands for a secular or more correctly non-communal government where all people, to whatever religion or community they may belong, will be equal before the law and will have equal opportunities.' He accused the Congress of wooing the Muslim voters and said the idea of a secular State showed a confused and diseased mind. Veer Savarkar reiterated that the Sabha stood for Independent Akhand Bharatvarsha.

in West Bengal by the beginning of the New Year³ All our programmes have been upset by various delays, some of which were unavoidable It has become a serious problem now whether it is even possible to hold these elections in time So far as we are concerned, we would like to have them, but the burden lies on the provincial governments and we have, therefore, asked them whether they can discharge it properly

12 After January 26th, we shall have an old new Parliament and about a hundred new members will come to it⁴ Probably soon there will be elections in most provinces to fill vacancies I earnestly trust that your province will send suitable men, who can help in Parliament In this connection, I might remind you that it would be desirable to encourage the return of members of the Scheduled Castes, as they are not adequately represented in Parliament

13 As you know the sugar position has given rise to a great deal of criticism and controversy We have had a debate in Parliament⁵ and we have announced that we shall have a full enquiry We propose to wait for the report of the Tariff Board⁶ before we institute any further enquiry Any policy decisions will also be taken after that report is received I wonder often why there is so much shouting when sugar is scarce In other countries people do without sugar, if it is not easily available, and in many countries it is strictly rationed still But we here in India have grown so soft and so accustomed to what are considered the pleasures of life that if we are called upon to do

3 It was later decided to hold elections under the new Constitution after the new electoral rolls had been finalised on the basis of adult franchise

4 The new members included those who were elected in bye elections and those representing states which had acceded to India

5 Shortage of sugar was the subject of several supplementary questions in Parliament on 30 November Hriday Nath Kunzru remarked It is astonishing that in spite of the serious complaints with regard to the shortage of sugar Government should not even possess information on this matter

6 A Tariff Board had been constituted with G L Mehta as President

without any of them there is loud cry Sugar is important but not quite so important as all that If necessary we should do without sugar or reduce the consumption of sugar to a minimum

14 The suspension of the Indo Pakistan Trade Agreement⁷ is a matter which might lead to serious consequences We had no desire to suspend this agreement but it became impossible for us to accept breaches of the agreement on the part of Pakistan and remain unmoved ourselves We had to take this step as not to have done it would have landed us in greater difficulties There has been vague talk about cutting off canal water supplies etc This is entirely misconceived and there should be no repetition of it

15 Kashmir is again before the Security Council⁸ We have recently received certain proposals⁹ made by the Chairman of the Security Council General McNaughton¹⁰ We did not like parts of these proposals indeed we disliked them intensely and we told the Chairman of the Security Council about this We

7 By 16 December there was total breakdown of the Indo Pakistan Trade Pact as a result of the controversy over devaluation On 23 December goods traffic to Pakistan by rail and steamer was suspended till further orders Supply of coal to Pakistan by India was also stopped

8 On 17 December the Kashmir Commission report came up for discussion before the Security Council

9 On 22 December McNaughton proposed a plan for the progressive demilitarization of Kashmir which was unacceptable to India as it accorded the same status to India and Pakistan on the one hand and to Jammu and Kashmir state and Azad Kashmir state on the other

10 General Andrew G L McNaughton (1887-1966) Chief of the Canadian General Staff 1929-35 G O C in C First Canadian Army 1942-43 Minister of National Defence Canada 1944-45 Canadian Representative on the U N Atomic Energy Commission 1946-49 member Security Council 1948-49

have now put in certain amendments to those proposals¹¹ and we await further action by the Security Council¹²

16 Two events of high importance have taken place. One is the inauguration of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. This is a historic event and for us in India more especially it has peculiar significance. The future of Indonesia is not going to be an easy one just as we have not had an easy time. They will have to work hard and gradually build themselves up.

17 The problem of China has troubled us greatly. The position now is that practically the whole of continental China is under the new regime which is predominantly communist. China has a strong centralised government and no country can ignore it for long. After full thought and frequent consultations with other countries we have decided to recognise this new Government of China as from today.

18 As this new year comes I have to remind you of the Grow More Food Campaign. This has been and is our first priority and I would not like you to slacken your effort in the least. We

11 These were (1) disbandment or disarming of the Azad Kashmir Forces should be placed on the same basis as the withdrawal of the regular and irregular forces of Pakistan and references in McNaughton's proposals to the armed forces and militia of the state of Kashmir should be omitted. (2) in so far as the northern areas were concerned the responsibility for their defence should vest in the Government of India and their administration should vest in the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. According to the McNaughton proposals the administration was to be under the existing local authorities subject to United Nations supervision.

12 As McNaughton's proposals were unacceptable to both India and Pakistan the Security Council on 14 March 1950 adopted a resolution for appointment of a mediator and the dissolution of the Kashmir Commission. Sir Owen Dixon, a judge of the Australian High Court, was appointed mediator on 12 April 1950.

would like to help you to the best of our ability, and indeed we shall do so. But please do not look to the Centre always for every kind of help financial or other. You must depend upon your own resources.

And so with all good wishes for the New Year,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Glossary

Adalat	court of law
Akhand Bharatvarsha	undivided India
'Azad Kashmir'	the portion of Kashmir occupied by Pakistan
Bachao Fauj (Kashmir)	self defence army
Bande Mataram	salute to the motherland
Bhangi	sweeper
Char lands	the alluvial land created by a river changing course
Chundar	a pair of breeches
Crore	ten million or one hundred lakhs
Dal	organisation, association
Darbar	court, ceremonial assembly, government of a princely state
Dewan	chief minister in a princely state
Firman	decree, mandate, command
Gurdwara	Sikh temple
Jagir	assignment of a tract of land and its revenue
Jagirdar	holder of a jagir
Khadi	cloth woven of handspun yarn
Kisan	peasant
Jirga	council of elders
Kurta	loose shirt
Lakh	one hundred thousand
Maidan	open space in town, parade ground
Mela	a fair
Meos	a Muslim tribe of cultivators in Haryana
Nai Talim	basic education
Pagree	colloquially a lump sum paid at the time of renting a house

Patwari	a village level revenue official
Pawindas	nomads of Afghanistan
Quaid i Azam	the supreme ruler
Rabi	spring harvest
Rajpramukh	a head of the merged princely states
Raksha Dal	organisation for self protection
Sangam	confluence of rivers at Allahabad
Sarf i Khas	estates belonging to royalty in princely states
Satyameva Jayate	truth alone triumphs
Shariat	the Mohammedan law
Sherwani	long coat
Tahsil	a revenue sub division
Tahsildar	head of a tahsil
Zamindar	landlord
Zamindari	landlord's estate
Zindabad	long live

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